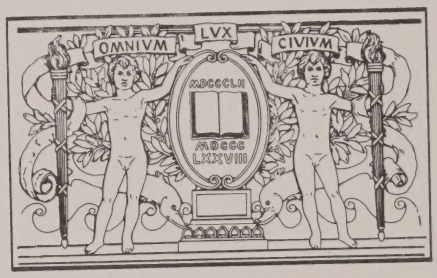
MEMORIES

WEDMORE



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MEMORIES

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PASTORALS OF FRANCE

RENUNCIATIONS

BALZAC

ON BOOKS AND ARTS

WHISTLER AND OTHERS

ORGÉAS AND MIRADOU

THE COLLAPSE OF THE PENITENT

SOME OF THE MODERNS

ETCHINGS

MEMORIES

BY

FREDERICK WEDMORE

"Acceptez donc les efforts
de ma mémoire"
AIMÉE DE COIGNY

SECOND EDITION

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DEDICATION

To the Marquise de Lasteyrie

Our friendship, my dear Madame de Lasteyrie, is yet of the Present: so that in any but an incidental mention of it this book would wander out of settled bounds. But a dedicatory word may still remind me of bright June in Paris, and of so many golden days in mellow Autumns, amongst your woods and festooned gardens, beyond which stretch to a remote horizon your pastures of La Brie.

F. W.

PREFACE

THE title of this book itself implies that there is here no Autobiography: no long, consecutive record of events that are one's own; but a selection of memories. They are more of people than of things. People —especially people of many sorts—are what is most interesting in the world: except the pursuit of an art. And it is sketches of people, in different spheres of work and of pleasure, that I have essayed to make. Nothing else.

References to the living are incidental and occasional. On the four walls of my little gallery, space has been found mainly for sketches of the dead: dead friends very often: men and women whose work is done, their careers ended; whom I knew ten, twenty, thirty — yes, some of them even forty years ago.

In an art not mine—the art of line and colour — I know exactly the collection of sketches with which, were they but worthy

of it, I should like mine, here, to be compared. In trying to convey, in words thoughtfully studied, yet often ineffectual, my impressions of this figure and that, I have had in my mind's eye, before me as my model, those vivid, learned 'preparations,' as he called them—sketches they were from life, without flattery as without malice—which the strong pastel draughtsman of the faces of the French Eighteenth Century, Maurice Quantin Latour, left to his brother as a legacy. His brother rightly bestowed them upon the artist's native place, where they to-day make obligatory the pilgrimage of students of the time they cover, to the Museum of a town otherwise dreary, in grey North-Eastern France: Saint Quentin, in the Aisne.

My work, of course, could not approach Latour's great standard. Yet perhaps it has not actually suffered by having, in its execution, been dominated by the presence of a high and an impossible ideal.

F. W.

September, 1912

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MEMORIES

I

THE TERRYS, LONG AGO

"HA!" I said—exulting over him a little —to a young friend, a soldier, a few months ago—we had been talking with zest about the Theatre—"I have seen one thing at least that you will never see: I have seen Kate Terry, Ellen Terry, and Mrs. Kendal, acting together in a Burlesque."

Forgiving the unseemly boast, which my accumulated years condoned, that stripling of Fashion—his voice charged with the assurance and the wisdom which are so abundant in extreme youth—promptly replied, "You had a jolly sight better look sharp, sir, and write your Reminiscences; for it must be a century since you saw that burlesque."

"You make us out to be a little *old*," I said, visibly wounded. "Kate Terry, Ellen, Mrs. Kendal, myself, remember!"

"Only one of you, sir," he answered. "The ladies, we know, are women of genius—and I have heard you say that genius never gets old."

"But the vulgar standards of the Registrar-General!"—I began by protesting—"they do exist, after all. However, I will take it to heart. I will set down, while there is time, a few things that occur to me. And, as some one might print them, why shouldn't I begin with the Stage—begin, I mean, for once in my life, by telling the Public what the Public cares to hear?"

I was as good as my word. About the burlesque then; and when and where it was acted.

It was played at the Theatre Royal, Bristol: a small and old-world play-house, which, at the time I am about to speak of, had still its great traditions—traditions from the days of Garrick. Garrick had praised the theatre's acoustic properties, and I remember myself, admiring, under a certain dinginess, the elegance of its form. The time I speak of—when I knew it well—was the Autumn of the year before that in which the management of Fechter began at the Lyceum. I suppose that is another way of saying that the year was 1863.

Those mid-Victorian days were the best

days of the local "stock companies"—as everybody knows whose interest in the theatre is of at all long standing—and I think I am right in saying that the stock company of the old Bristol and of the Bath theatre—both theatres were under one management—was about the most capable of any then existing in England. The Manager was Chute, a connection or relative of the Macreadys—his wife, Macready's step-sister, I believe. He was an excellent specimen of the Actor-Manager of that day. He managed other people wisely, and he rarely acted himself. When he did act, in one or other of the few parts to which he was limited, his acting was deemed locally a treat and an event. He was a good Don César de Bazan, and, by his affluent and unctuous humour, as well as by his portliness, a good Falstaff.

But Chute's services as Manager were greater, distinctly, than his services as Actor; and in the Autumn I speak of—eighteen sixty-two, if it was not sixty-three—he added to the Company that was his all the year round, two notable young artists who were to be with him for a couple of months or so before they went to London. The two were the two Terrys—Kate and Ellen.

Kate Terry—destined, before her marriage to Arthur Lewis, to know a few most brilliant years of metropolitan fame—was the leading lady in that first part of the season at Bristol for which alone she was available. She was very young then—twenty or one and twenty—and not a celebrated person. But she had been upon the stage from childhood; she was perfectly at home on it; the Charles Keans, at the Princess's, had made much of her in her adolescence—I believe she was Cordelia at seventeen — and, though the general public had not conceived, as yet, any marked affection for her, she had attracted connoisseurs, and on one occasion at least, a few months before she was in Bristol, had had a brief and marked success. The time I speak of was when Miss Terry, at the St. James's Theatre, was suddenly promoted to a part filled before her illness by the Actress who was in command there—in real or nominal management—Miss Herbert: the Miss Herbert of *Lady Audley's Secret*, done at that theatre: the golden-haired Miss Herbert who sat a good deal to Rossetti, and of his models, not seldom undesirable, was one of the most rightly attractive.

Kate Terry was playing, I suppose, a small part at the St. James's, while being

Miss Herbert's under-study; and when Miss Herbert was ill she had her first great chance: it was in *Friends or Foes*—an adaptation of Sardou's *Nos Intimes*. Fechter presumably saw her then, and formed his opinion, and acted on it. Tom Taylor certainly saw her. She obtained from Fechter an engagement to play with him the heroine of the *Duke's Motto*, when he should open the Lyceum, which he was to do very soon. And she won the good opinion and the firm friendship of Taylor—and both of them she retained to the end.

Tom Taylor, at that time, was not only an occasional critic of great acumen, but likewise one of the most popular of the dramatists. His *Ticket-of-Leave Man*, even now, most people know to be a very skilful rearrangement of a French piece—with a good deal of English character, English lower middle-class character, somehow got into it. It had lately been produced at the Olympic, and its success was great. So high was Taylor's opinion of Miss Terry—for I suppose this to have been how the matter came about—that he "entrusted her"—"entrusted" is a word an actress loves, as it at once implies importance—he "entrusted her," then, with the part of the heroine, May

Edwards. Not indeed in London—where he had no more the opportunity of doing so—but in the two or three rather notable performances given at Canterbury, in the Cricket week, by the "Old Stagers." I say nothing about—and certainly nothing against—the original performance of the part, at the Olympic, by Miss Kate Savile; a niece, I was told, of Helen Faucit. But the charm of Kate Terry was a distinct one; much of it caused not at all by formal good looks—though she had good looks enough, with telling grey eyes, brown hair, and a complexion not rudely broken into red and white, but "*uni*"—like a sky of Boudin's. The "charm" of Kate Terry was in her intelligence, and, may I add, in her visible niceness. She was the most unstagey of Actresses, in a stagey day.

We were privileged to see in Bristol a repetition of that performance of Kate Terry's which had been so successful at Canterbury. Tom Taylor came down especially to see it. I recollect meeting him for a few minutes—he was a great celebrity: I was an unknown boy—at the Terrys' lodgings, in Queen Square. There, were the father and mother—a couple well known in later days, in their picturesque age, to most London "First

Nighters"; but at that time they were middle-aged people, less known and less in evidence. Mr. Terry—the "Mr. B. Terry" of the playbills—that mysterious "B" seemed to me almost as great a find as the "Z. Marcas" of Balzac—was no doubt a capable actor, though he was not then acting. He taught elocution, from time to time, or often, in London, at his house near Mornington Crescent; and, as his daughter Kate once said to me, most justly I am sure, as well as with conviction, "My father is a very good judge of everything at the theatre." Mrs. Terry, with hair already slightly silvered, had a great deal of the personal charm transmitted to her children. She was motherly with grace, and friendly with dignity. Ellen was a thorough hobbledehoy; good-natured, pretty, bouncing, a wayward flutter of light. She would play Cupid, but only on the Stage. And when she was not on the Stage, she was playing pranks with her people.

The two Miss Terrys acted, at that time, everything that was given them; and that is how, having seen Ellen in the burlesque, I saw her in Jessica or Nerissa in *The Merchant*, and having seen Kate in *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*, in *Juliet*, in *The Lady of Lyons*, and in one or two pure melo-

dramas, I came to see her in a burlesque, with her sister, and with the third lady I named to begin with: who was then an artist in the making.

That other member of Chute's Company who was destined to be especially celebrated, was, of course, the young woman who became the great Mrs. Kendal. She was then a girl of sixteen, at the most; living with her father and mother—people who were "personalities" quite as much as Mr. and Mrs. Terry, though, in type, as different as possible from them. Robertson, Madge Robertson's father, was already an old or at least an elderly man, accepting, with great equanimity of spirit, days less brilliant than some he had known. He had been, in his time, Manager of the theatrical Company "working" what was known as the "Hull Circuit," which included towns in Lincolnshire, like Grimsby and Louth. He had married a German lady, or a lady of German extraction—I myself had no cause to conjecture what I heard long afterwards was the fact: that Mrs. Robertson was of foreign origin. In Chute's Company she was the "First Old Woman," and an extremely clever actress she undoubtedly was. She played, with a merit that Mrs. Stephens,

her better-known contemporary, with a London reputation, can hardly have exceeded, the good-natured, fussy Landlady in *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*. She played with a pungency not surpassed by Mrs. Stirling—though certainly with less than Mrs. Stirling's style—the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. Classic parts fell likewise to her share; and those were days when Sheridan Knowles, and even the plays affected by the Kembles, had not, in the provinces at least, gone quite out of fashion. I imagine that in the exercise of their profession Mrs. Robertson had always been more important than her lord; but he too had sterling qualities, that count upon the Stage—and they were genuine, interesting people.

The parts that old Mr. Robertson played, in the Bristol days, when I saw him, were chiefly those of the greater dignitaries in Shakespearian drama; literally, men whose power and state is everything, and whose words are few. He passed from the impersonation of Doge to Duke and Duke to ornamental Monarch. Few as his words were—his words upon the stage—Robertson had difficulty in remembering them; and, before I knew him personally, his large, slow figure was familiar to me, pacing, in the morning, the broad, secluded street in which the Theatre

lay—Old King Street—or it might be the greensward of the Square, under Rysbrach's statue, muttering, repeating, rehearsing in a sense, as he paced. He was of dignified presence. Wherever you met him, you would have looked at and liked him. A very simple kindliness made you at once at home.

I do not know positively what was the first piece in which I saw Madge Robertson—to whose perfected art, of other years, I consecrate a later chapter—but I am almost sure it was a Pantomime, in which she played Cinderella; or was it that burlesque that I spoke of to begin with? Thin, immature, extremely young, almost childish, or, if you wish, schoolgirlish in appearance, there was even then a certain promise about her. I, at all events, believed in her from the beginning—believed in her, and did not prove wrong. I got to know the Robertsons not long after I knew the Terrys. Madge Robertson stayed; the Terrys—Kate engaged in London in advance—had to leave Bristol. I was, then, the pupil of Joseph Leech, proprietor and Editor of *The Bristol Times* — an Irishman, of breeding, worth, and wit—and one of the first things I was allowed to do, when I got to his office, after studying

abroad, was to write short notices of the plays.

Madge Robertson went on improving—and my notices of her went on improving too. Brief though they were, I believe they were fittingly glowing. So glowing were they, it seems—though, in the paucity of my experience, I had no visible right to deliver judgment at all—that when a celebrated Tragedian, as he was accounted in that day—it was Hermann Vezin, whom we have all respected in his age—came "starring" to the Bristol Theatre, with his wife, "Mrs. Charles Young," and found his wife not appreciated, he took occasion to write a letter to my Editor, attributing a quite ridiculous amount of influence to cordial little paragraphs about Madge Robertson, and saying I was over head and ears in love with her. "His inamorata" was the excellent Mr. Vezin's too confident phrase. He even induced Chute, the Manager, to call on Joseph Leech, on this matter. In my mind's eye, to-day, I see the portly figure of Falstaff and Don César, arriving, with only half a heart, to open his case. There was nothing whatever in it. Leech laughed. I mention the business partly because it has often since amused me to remember it, and partly because I think it possible that I may have always known

how to draw the line between profound appreciation of an artist and personal admiration of, or, rather, personal attachment to, a woman. If I *did* know how to draw the line, I trust I was not a prig. It seems to me, a little sense of justice was all that was required to enable one to draw it.

A word or two may be said about some other members of Mr. Chute's Company. There were the Rignolds — William and George—both destined to be popular. There was Charles Coghlan; then a very promising —to some people, even a very fascinating— man; and there was Fosbrooke, a Low Comedian, extremely funny—an actor who, though greatly appreciated in those two theatres of Bath and Bristol, did not, elsewhere, I think, receive his due. His geniality, his genuine humour, should have carried him to a wider celebrity. Then there was Henrietta Hodson, young, suave, with soft and merry Irish eyes that raked the Dress Circle. She married a Bristol solicitor, and later, Henry Labouchere. Then there was Alfred Bishop—a boy then: now a quaint "character actor"—and his amiable sister, Kate, to-day the mother of an artist pleasantly mutinous, and frank and fresh—one of the Stage's hopes— Miss Marie Löhr. When, almost recently, in

Stratford Place, at our friend Mrs. Henniker's, I found myself by Miss Löhr at lunch, how foolish not to talk to her of those old times her mother knew! Instead of that, we discussed seriously the number of minutes in which, in a certain lady's motor, it had been possible to pass from Scarborough to Filey. One does these silly things.

Not in my time, but only two or three years earlier, Arthur Wood, a comedian who made some name in London—at the old Strand—had been of the Bristol Company; and I have seen Bristol playbills, of a day a little before my own, in which the name of Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft) appeared, attached to characters in Burlesque. Marie Wilton had not at that period taken to Comedy. Or did she, at a Benefit, play Nan, in *Good for Nothing?* There was, in any case, among the Bristol and Bath playgoers of my early time, a tradition of her piquancy, and an interest in her success at the Strand.

II

CHARLES DICKENS

BEFORE ever I went to the Theatre—which in youth was a treat to me, continually—I heard a voice and saw a spectacle the Theatre does not afford. I had the treat of hearing a man of genius reading his own works.

A very young schoolboy, at home from school—it was at Clifton, in 1858—I was present, with my father, at the first and again at the fifth Reading given by Charles Dickens on his first great country tour. It was only a few months after he had taken the decisive step of which John Forster disapproved—the step of reading, not, as he had hitherto done, occasionally, for charities, but systematically, with a set programme, and in many towns, and for the benefit of his own pocket. The interest roused in this matter was everywhere keen, and nowhere, I should think, can it have been keener than in Bristol, of which Clifton—Clifton where I heard him—is, as the reader knows, the fashionable

suburb, and a brilliant little town in itself. The Victoria Rooms, there, were among the very earliest as well as one of the most elegant of modern concert halls. They are still, I believe, for balls and concerts, a favourite place of assembly, and they must date from at all events no later than the late 'Forties; for one of the first recollections of my childhood is that of finding myself, with my mother, in her drawing-room, in Buckingham Place, and hearing—and, I suppose, between opened window-curtains, seeing—the stream of carriages pouring towards those Victoria Rooms, for a Concert by the "Swedish Nightingale" (Christine Nilsson's forerunner), Jenny Lind. A stream as full and as continuous must have poured in the same direction on the night of the 2nd of August, 1858, when Mr. Dickens—arrived that day from London —read his Christmas story, *The Chimes.*

We had excellent stalls, and got there early to occupy them. Immense was the excitement. "*Le tout Bristol,*" and all the countryside in addition, was present and expectant. In the row behind us, a physician of more than local distinction was discussing Dickens with acquaintances. He was holding forth: he was expressing his preferences. *David Copperfield,* according to this estimable man

of medicine, was—as he declared it, in round, full voice, to be heard by many—"the incomparable masterpiece."

The man of medicine was a character. Highly scientific—as I knew, years afterwards—he was a discoverer, and, withal, practical in his work! His ways about money matters were individual and interesting; and they were above all things simplified. They pointed almost at Socialism; although very innocently, for Socialism was quite unheard of in his day. He never, I believe, sent in an account for services rendered, and, to boot, was entirely indifferent as to whether, when a patient went to see him, that patient left a guinea in his palm or did not leave it. By way of compensation for this sublime, unusual attitude, taken up by him habitually when he sat in his study, he ignored alike the first bills and the subsequent reminders of his tradespeople. Money — whether sovereigns, small change, or cheques of importance—money was not his affair. He neither paid it out nor gathered it in. He lived in spheres of thought into which pelf and "filthy dross" did not enter.

But the Reading!

Presently—it was eight o'clock to the moment, for Dickens, all his life, was punctu-

ality itself—in front of the screens upon the platform, there walked to his maroon baize-covered desk—is it the one that his surviving daughter cherishes, the one that I beheld not very long ago, off the staircase of her villa at Kensington?—there walked, then, to the desk a man of middle height, erect, slim, full-coloured, closely knit, and with the nerve and sensitiveness of a racehorse. Evening dress, of course—what the reporters chronicle as "immaculate evening dress"—and a camellia in his button-hole. His introduction was one short sentence—he would read to us, with our permission, *The Chimes*.

With a voice of trained flexibility and of appropriate changefulness, and with an amount of facial expression half-way, as it now seems to me, between that of the accomplished reader in the drawing-room and that of the good actor on the stage—but inclining even then, to the dramatic—Mr. Dickens read, or to a certain extent recited (but the book was ever before him), his story, until an hour had passed quickly. Then he retired for ten minutes' breathing-time—for himself as well as his hearers. Coming back refreshed, he read for all but another hour: and finished amidst a scene of enthusiasm. Toby Veck, and all the world of Toby Veck, had lived before us. To

boot, the Master, whom few of us, in Clifton in those days, would otherwise have seen at all, had by countenance and bearing, by voice and gesture, delightfully revealed himself and his incomparable, magnetic charm.

That was the Monday. Upon the Tuesday, Dickens travelled to Exeter, and read; on Wednesday and Thursday read at Plymouth. On the Friday, he was back again at the Victoria Rooms, Clifton, with *The Christmas Carol.* We heard him in the crustiness of Scrooge, in the irrepressible geniality of Scrooge's nephew, in the fanciful and pleasing humour of this person and that; and, best of all, in the tender brevity of the pathos of Tiny Tim. He was great in characterisation.

How many occasions of hearing and studying him, in rather later life, was I foolish enough to miss!

It was in January, 1869, I think—when I already lived in London—that, happening to be again in Gloucestershire for a few weeks, I heard Dickens in the latest, most immediately striking, most obviously dramatic of his Readings—"Sikes and Nancy," from *Oliver Twist.* Again it was the Victoria Rooms, Clifton—a crowd as big and as representative as that of ten years before, and certainly as enthusiastic. He read two light little pieces

—"Bob Sawyer's Party," from *Pickwick*, with admirable comedy, and "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn," with a gentle humour—as well as the tremendous episode. The light pieces apparently cost him little. The tremendous episode—the "Sikes and Nancy"—strained, excited, and tended to destroy him. His performance of it at Clifton he chronicled, I believe, as the best that he had so far given.

Only once again—it must have been in the Autumn of the same year, for he died before the Autumn of '70—did I see Dickens. That was one evening in September, at Verrey's Restaurant in Regent Street. He was entertaining an American. Probably he had been showing the American something of the London—the then, to most of the world, undiscovered London—which he knew. He was dressed in his dark navy-blue serge. He was the mariner-like Charles Dickens—he was Dickens the inspired skipper. His bronzed, weather-beaten face looked tired, I thought. He had a glass of sherry and bitters—such as they gave you at the "Blue Posts," and not at the "Blue Posts" alone at that time—to pick him up for the meal that was to follow. But I, at least—a stranger—had no reason to suspect that the line, with him, was nearly all "run out": that the greatest genius of all

English Fiction—he whose being and whose art prompted half our race to personal affection for him—was near, very near, to his end.

On a June morning, of the year 1870—taking my after-breakfast walk of those days, in the Hampstead where I lived—going along the High Street, past the newsagent's, my eye caught some large letters on a poster of the *Daily News*—"Death of Charles Dickens." I went in quickly, bought a paper, glanced at it; then, hurrying homewards to Church Row, I made for my wife's room, and said, as I remember, half aghast, "Dickens is dead!"

I have thought, always, that a great writer's end plunges the world into a sudden poverty. But only once have I been as thoroughly "bowled over" as on that June morning. And that was when, years afterwards, one Winter day in Westminster, four words, upon a poster also, struck my eye—"Death of Robert Browning." The first time, it was a friend and benefactor of Humanity who had disappeared. The second time, it was that likewise—and, to boot, a friend of my own.

III

BERTON—"SARAH"—DESCLÉE

IT was my fortune, when I was still quite young, but some years after my Bristol stage education—my introduction to the players' world—to see a little of the Theatre in Paris. A French friend of mine, in England, made me known to Pierre Berton, then the favourite *jeune premier* at the Gymnase—acting, at the time, I think, with Landrol: certainly with Blanche Pierson, who, in old age now, retains, at the Français, much of her charm, and all of her authority. In 1869 and 1870 the sunniest of youthful comrades, Blanche Pierson, like Madame Arnould-Plessy before her, has passed from coquette to *grande dame* with silver hair.

When I first knew Berton, I was staying many weeks in Paris. Berton was a few years my senior. I had a great admiration for him—for his colouring, his voice, his walk, his manner and his coat. I was poor, I was nobody, and, though I asked him who it was that made his coat, he would not allow me

to go to his tailor—"to whom I should not *myself* go," he said, "*si je ne jouais pas la Comédie.*"

I used to dine with Berton in his little flat—high up above the Faubourg Poissonière—where, in rooms hung with Nevers and Rouen pottery of his collecting, was his young wife, the excellent mother of children to whom he was devoted. Away from the theatre, with its excitements and activities, he led a quiet life. Coming from a thoroughly educated stock—people who lived for intellectual things—Pierre Berton was a reader, and, as his little curtain-raiser, *Les Jurons de Cadillac*—which holds the stage to-day—sufficiently attests—not to speak of newer pieces—a writer, besides. He complained, indeed, that for certain practical purposes, in connection with his profession, his education had been "*trop littéraire.*" Like many other young Frenchmen of the period, he had hankerings after Philosophy and Natural Science—and these had not come his way.

Pierre Berton was the son of the elder Berton—"leading man" at the Vaudeville—who had played with Mlle. Fargueil at an earlier time (about 1865) in the much-talked-of piece in which Dumas *fils* and Emile de Girardin had a hand. *Les Deux Sœurs*, that

piece was called. But when I knew Pierre Berton, his father, after a life of intellectual and emotional stress, some home discords, and some passionate adventures, had died, with mind, I fear, unbalanced. This was publicly known. His wife had been the daughter of Samson, which made Pierre Berton Samson's grandson. Samson had been one of the greatest actors of his time. His memory was cherished at the Français. He was a great patriot, as well as a great artist; and I remember Pierre telling me, that, though extreme old age was undoubtedly upon him ere his death, he had really died of grief at the triumph of the Prussians—at the humiliation of Paris.

Samson, as is so often the custom with the fine French actors, was, in his day, a professor at the Conservatoire—M. Legouvé calls him "*le professorat fait homme.*" Among hi pupils, more than a generation before the time I speak of, there was counted the young and brilliant Jewess who became the great Rachel. She had owed much to him; and Berton one day showed me a bundle of letters from her to her master—letters, my friend said, which, if read in the order in which they had been written, might make one a cynic; for, in the earlier documents, behold Rachel un-

known, and brimming over with gratitude, and in the later, Rachel, celebrated and victorious, forgetful and cold!

Berton's opinion of Sarah Bernhardt—in her youth, at that period—was subject to much fluctuation. At one time he spoke of her with reserve, and without enthusiasm. At another, when I recalled that attitude to him, "*Non, j'aime bien Sarah Bernhardt*," he would say. He was with her, then, at the Odéon. Their frequent contact—the two so much together on the stage—with rough and smooth, with give and take, with friction and with pleasantness—led, not unnaturally, to those vicissitudes of feeling. Some there are who pretend—I mean, who aver—that if a man, night after night, enacts stage love affairs with the same woman, there comes an hour at which indifference can endure no longer, and there is either fondness or, in Shakesperian phrase, "a fixed hate and a certain loathing."

It was my good fortune to see Sarah at a time when she possessed a youthful charm certainly in excess of any that was hers when she became world-famous. I did not see her in *Le Passant*—the piece in which, as Zanetto, the Italian minstrel, she had first made her mark at the Odéon; playing that part to the

Silvia of the author's (François Coppée's) friend, Mademoiselle Agar, who had smoothed his way to the stage; but I saw her, not so long afterwards, in *L'Autre* of George Sand, in which she was good, certainly; though not, as far as I remember, at her best; and I saw her also in the very earliest days of her performance of André Theuriet's *Jean-Marie.* Thérèse, in that dramatic poem, is a part which, rightly, she has but lately absolutely abandoned, and of which her performance, in those early days, was exquisite and complete.

Almost the first time I saw Sarah Bernhardt off the stage, was in an ante-room at the Théâtre Français. I mention the circumstance because she said a thing that was characteristic. She had come out tired from rehearsal—"tired," but more than "tired," exhausted, *énervée, exténuée:* what people now call "dead." She was abusing her fate and her profession, in no measured terms. "If I had a daughter," declared Sarah, "rather than that she should go upon the Stage, I'd take her out into the *Place*, there, where the *fiacres* are, and roll her head under the first cab-wheel"—and the "extenuated" tragedian suited her action to her word. "The *stage*, indeed, for any one!—*c'est le dernier des métiers.*" I

have no doubt that half an hour afterwards, when Sarah had lunched and rested, the Stage returned to its position as, to her mind, the greatest of great arts.

Sarah Bernhardt began to visit London rather late in her career—at least, those who had watched her celebrity, and experienced her charm, in France—I amongst them—were minded to think so; though, as it proved, a generation, or, who shall say, how much more, of noble work, still lay in front of her. In her first London season, she desired to exhibit her Sculpture. She had been a pupil of Falguière or Franceschini, and had put the teaching to good purpose; for not inconsiderable was her own gift. A room was taken in Piccadilly. Her portrait busts, her group—was it of a drowned fisherman on the knees of his mother, or was it really a *Pietà?*—all her things, were placed there. There was a Private View, really private: the invitations, to a few dozen persons at most. Several were in the room already when Sarah arrived; tired again, as I saw her, after rehearsal, in Paris, but absolutely gracious to everybody, and making the round of people and of statues—or busts mainly—with undisguised interest, and occasional epigram. Her comments on her busts, or, rather, on the people those busts

represented, were amusing and pungent. Here was an aged dramatist: she chucked him under the chin—in marble. She was in great spirits—was looking forward, of course, to seeing Irving, and even more anxiously, I think, to seeing Ellen Terry. At least she wished me to understand that that was so.

The last time I saw Sarah—and it was years ago—I did not see her at all—except, that is, for a minute, at the very end of the function. Mr. Horace Sedger had arranged a series of *Tableaux vivants*, and, if the initial experiment had been quite successful, he would, I suppose, have carried them into the ordinary afternoon or evening bill, at what was then his theatre—the Prince of Wales's—but, as it was, I think their representation was confined to that one occasion. Sarah herself could not, of course, have appeared on any other, as a reciter of verse between Tableaux. Bigger engagements prevented her. But, for a single afternoon, that was her task. She managed it marvellously. If there was failure, or fear of failure, Sarah at least had no share in it—it rested with the Tableaux—with the subjects—with the poet, Armand Silvestre, if you will; for his work, though of a certain grace and freedom, is not the work of a master. Between the Tableaux,

Sarah, behind a screen all the time, recited his verses: being herself, by reason of the screen, quite invisible, as has been implied already. What severer test could there possibly have been of the charm and potency of the famous *voix d'or!* That, and her elocution, told perfectly. And when, in response to the applause, she came before the screen for a moment, in her bow of thanks you felt the charm of her gesture. It was "as if the spirit bowed," as Laurence Sterne says, beautifully.

A French actress, in some respects absolutely as great as Sarah Bernhardt—and perhaps more inexplicably and subtly sympathetic—it was my fortune to see a good deal of; but only on the stage. This was Aimée Desclée, who had become famous in Paris through her representation of Frou Frou, and who afterwards appeared, with a success not always as popular, but certainly as artistic, in several of the pieces which Dumas *fils* fashioned not quite without reference to her. Short was her great career.

When Aimée Desclée first astonished Paris by the performance of Frou Frou, she was already (though still young) an actress not only of extraordinary and sensitive genius, but of wide and deep, delightful and painful experience. Her letters, published in France,

a good many years ago now—they would well bear translating—reveal, with unusual frankness, the character and ways of the woman—the sadness, the aspirations, the temptations, the indulgences, the sudden self-control, the bitter disappointments, the greatly varying health, that had, one and all of them, so immediate an influence upon the brilliant, subtle, faultless art whose evidence we welcomed.

Since I saw Desclée in *Frou Frou*, I have seen Sarah Bernhardt in it; and, though I yield to no one in belief in the powers of Sarah, I am bound to say that the true Frou Frou was the Frou Frou of Desclée—who made of her a creature more modern, more sensitive, more variable, than did the accepted tragedian, in a part a little out of her line. No doubt the power of Bernhardt, in the later scenes especially, was more obvious, and therefore more immediately taking; its appeal was far more popular—it was, if the real truth is to be expressed about it, more stagey. Even in the more dramatic phases of a character wonderfully studied and intricately composed by its authors—Meilhac and Halévy—Desclée was superior to Sarah. Still more certainly was she superior to her in all the lighter phases: the flippancy of Sarah being visibly assumed; her delicacy less innate. Not

without an eye to *l'hérédité*, Meilhac and Halévy constructed Brigard, the father, and Frou Frou, the daughter;—those excursions into Bohemia which Brigard joyously avowed, Frou Frou herself was not unwilling to undertake. But the little Bohemianism of Frou Frou was always the Bohemianism of a gentlewoman; and this Desclée made plain. The Bohemianism of Sarah was modified by no class and no traditions; strange to say, it was the Bohemianism, not of a delicate nature, poetic in its excursions into *l'île enchantée* —Watteau's *île de Cythère*. It was, for once, the Bohemianism of the man in the street. Now, is that *characteristic* of Sarah? Of course it is not.

When Aimée Desclée came to London—it was for the only time, and it was in the last year of her life: when she reaped a short harvest of money and fame at the Princess's —I saw her again in *Frou Frou*, and I saw her in *Diane De Lys*. But in the last-named part she was not so absolutely remarkable. Besides, her failing health told, in London, no doubt, to some extent, upon the excellence of her performance; although, as I know from people to whom she had introductions, and whom she was supposed to visit, she took, during those triumphant but difficult

weeks, the most scrupulous care of herself; practically reserving her life—which, of old, she had given so lavishly in the directions that pleased her—for the Theatre alone.

In some respects the most wonderful creation of Aimée Desclée's, was a thing done at the Gymnase, midway, as to time, between the earlier performances of *Frou Frou* and the actress's latest appearance in England. This was *Une Visite de Noces;* a one-act piece, which I suppose to have been written expressly for her. Like *Diane*, it was by Dumas the younger, who knew her intimately, and took curious and learned account of her skill and her temperament. I doubt whether the performance of *Une Visite de Noces* was sanctioned in England: at all events I have no remembrance of the extraordinary little thing having been played here. Nowadays, even in London, not to speak of Paris and Brussels, we are accustomed to performances much bolder than any that were considered fitting to our innocence twenty or thirty years ago; and, after all, there is a wide gulf fixed between *Une Visite de Noces*, which was not allowed us, a score, or more, years since—though it probably would be now—and a later success of literary and theatrical realism, the *Zaza* in which Réjane

has been so striking. In *Zaza*, the boldness of action and behaviour might, except for fully qualified audiences, be fairly objected to. In *Une Visite de Noces* it is the uncompromising character of the dialogue — one might almost say the cynicism of the sentiment. But the heart of Desclée was open to one, in *Une Visite de Noces;* it might be taken as a commentary on some of her own letters—or her own letters would be a fitting commentary on it. Little reason to wonder that Dumas—who admired the actress justly—who possessed the confidences of the woman, and repaid them with consideration and kindness—was delighted with her performance in this piece. And such a piece, whether one likes it or not—whether one approves or not of a dissection so complete, of an analysis of which the results are so bitter—lies absolutely outside the range of the ordinary trained actress, whether English or French. The experience of Desclée, and the nature of Desclée besides—so much adventure and a tender heart: high poetry and home-sickness for the gutter—were required to do this thing.

When Meilhac and Halévy wrote *Frou Frou*—I am almost sure that I am right in saying—it was not Desclée they had in

view. They were thinking, I believe, of Mademoiselle Delaporte; who, for a very short time, and quite in her youth, had taken a distinguished place at the Gymnase, and who, in the phrase of Pierre Berton to me, had been "snatched from us by Russia." Berton liked her as a woman; had been well content to act with her; and believed in her completely as an artist. It is no part of my business to give certificates of conduct; but I do not know why I may not say that Marie Delaporte's life was, judged by customary standards, as faultless as Rose Chéri's. The remark suggests the long-debated question of the bearing of personal experience on the art of the artist.

Mademoiselle Delaporte, "snatched" from Paris then, by the Théâtre Français of St. Petersburg—which had great rewards to offer—was unable to be at home an interpreter of the chief character of the Meilhac and Halévy play. She, naturally enough, however, created the part in St. Petersburg, and in her later years, coming back to France, for appearances comparatively infrequent, I believe she played the part there, but in it I never saw her. Indeed, like the greater number of English people of the time, I never saw Delaporte upon the stage at all; though when she came

to England, one summer, after the long series of Russian successes was ended, I saw something of her privately. She came, I recollect, to meet a few people, one evening, at the little house we lived in at Hampstead: I mean the one in Church Row. Hamilton Aïdé, the Meredith Townsends, and the Du Mauriers were, I remember, there—I can't remember who else. And, in the very small drawing-room, Delaporte went through a monologue, with ease, simplicity, and a measure of charm; but I never supposed it was at all a fair indication of what she could do on that real stage whereon I did not see her.

I remember dining with her and her brother, at Dieudonné's, in Ryder Street—a very different Dieudonné's from that of the present day. Instead of being in those years a restaurant smallish, but fashionable—quiet, but more or less "the thing"—it was a simple and thoroughly French hotel, kept by a retired physician, who gave it his name, and it was resorted to not at all by the ordinary public. It was the home rather—the family circle, almost—whilst they were in England, of the best French artists: whether writers, singers, painters, sculptors, or comedians. A perfectly homelike place it was, and a bit of the real France. I remember it not only from

dining with Mademoiselle Delaporte and her brother, in a room apart, but also from having, once or twice afterwards, taken occasion to join the small *table d'hôte*—a function of every day, in the little front dining-room. There, one night, was Fargueil, a *brune* of the *Midi*, energetic, electrical. The fare was simple, but excellent; very much the kind of thing that has been given since, on so much larger a scale, at a restaurant known for a while to all the world and his wife, or to all the world and somebody else's wife: the Hôtel—but No: I think it shall now be nameless.

IV

FRANÇOIS COPPÉE

ANOTHER Frenchman of distinction and genuine interest—now dead, alas!—of whom I saw a good deal, many years since, was François Coppée, the Poet: an Academician, naturally. I knew Coppée best in the days following pretty closely on his earlier successes: when he was indeed quite famous, but not officially sanctioned or qualified. I have mentioned him incidentally, already, in speaking of Sarah Bernhardt's performance in his exquisite little piece, *Le Passant*. I have said that was brought out at the Odéon through the instrumentality of his friend, Mademoiselle Agar. The poet went through many phases: through many even while he was still young. *Le Passant's* harmonious romance was succeeded by the tender and tempered realism of *Les Humbles*, with its *petit épicier* of Montrouge, *qui cassait le sucre avec mélancolie*. Then there was Olivier's disillusion and bitterness; *La Grève des Forgerons*, *Deux Douleurs*, and the later, religious resignation of *La Bonne Souffrance*. But no phase is of more lasting charm than that

which, in lines of faultless melody, *Le Passant* expressed.

Did I know Coppée in two houses? If I did, I have forgotten the first. What I recollect well, is his abode in the Rue Oudinot, where were his quarters during the time I was most accustomed to be with him. He lived in his small ground-floor flat, looking out into court or garden. Rather later, he acquired another—*corps de bâtiment*, shall I say very finely?—one or two rooms, a little *pavillon*, entirely to himself, and apart from the rooms of his family. That is perhaps why I am apt to speak, or think, sometimes, of two dwellings. When I first knew the Coppées, there were three in the house: old Madame Coppée, a brown little Bretonne; the poet her son; and his sister, Annette, cordial, expansive and flourishing. I said "three," but there was a servant who, though quite young, had established relations with them all, of a kind much commoner in France than in England. She did not sit at the table indeed; yet counted as one of the family; and if Coppée remarked, at breakfast, that he would go somewhere or other next Wednesday, the young woman, awake and agreeable, immediately interposed "You cannot do that: you dine with Monsieur de So-and-so," or

"Impossible! It is the first night at the Gymnase."

Coppée was, to all who were about him, a very lovable person; the familiarity of his dependents was of the friendliest sort; he was simplicity itself, and in this thing his mother and sister were like him. I can best describe them—the whole family—as a sort of survival of the good, simple French *bourgeois* family of the Eighteenth Century, that Chardin drew so well. They were of the *petite bourgeoisie:* of the *haute* not at all. Were it not for the alert interest that Coppée and his sister took in everything that was going on, and the extent to which Coppée himself was necessarily in touch with modern Letters and Art, and even, to some extent, Fashion—he was a frequenter, for instance, of the *salon* of the Princesse Mathilde—one might have described them as provincials who chanced to have alighted in Paris. But indeed that old-world quarter, the outskirts of the Faubourg St. Germain—a district of great old houses and convents and wide and placid gardens—is, in a sense, itself, provincial, to this day. It is the Parisian version—counterpart one cannot call it—of a tranquil corner of Westminster, where Barton Street and Cowley Street nestle under the great, grey Abbey.

Coppée, notwithstanding the tone of deep melancholy—resigned melancholy however, rather than pessimism—which runs through all his work, was a cheerful and lively person to sit with at table, or afterwards, with a cigarette, in his room. He was a keen and humorous observer, always penetrating, always clear-sighted, never for a moment ill-natured or harsh. His talk had freshness and piquancy. It had imagination. All the same, it is true that you felt the extreme and tragic gravity of his view of Life—and his own life. That was in part constitutional. Those were years in which he was constantly threatened to be classed with the consumptive. Once, at least, he was compelled to winter at Pau—"relaxing," if you like, but at Pau "*on ne crâche pas du sang.*" And it is possible that Coppée's buoyancy, as much as his depression, belonged to that physical temperament—the temperament, changeful, mercurial, of men whose malady—in its most dire form at least—he did fortunately escape. To boot, there was in him the blood of those who, through long generations, had gravely, slowly, in monotonous labours, looked out upon the vast and empty distances of Breton landscape, and heard in Winter, along their bitter and sad coasts, the passage of devastating storms.

V

GÉRÔME AND SARCEY

WHEN I was first accustomed to make long stays in Paris, Gérôme was perhaps the painter most in vogue; and I remember being taken to his house first by my kind old friend Auguste Guyard, a man of great originality, father of Stanislas Guyard, the distinguished Orientalist, professor at the Collège de France or the École des Hautes Études —I forget which; and he, like his father, is now dead.

The association of old M. Guyard with Léon Gérôme may possibly have been due to their being natives, or at one time inhabitants, of the same country-side. Whether Gérôme was originally from Guyard's country I am not perfectly sure—though I believe he was. He had at all events his country house within sight of the Vosges—"the Bastions of the East," in M. Maurice Barrès's significant, watchful phrase—no endless distance from Vesoul, from which, or its neighbourhood, came Guyard.

Incidentally, I may say that the type in

Franche Comté remains, to this day, curiously Spanish. Gérôme would certainly have struck one as naturally belonging to it; old Monsieur Guyard had a touch of it; the characteristics of the Spaniard were still more marked in his elder son, Antony, long a friend of mine in England, who had Spanish grace and deliberation and stateliness, and, as it chanced, little of the Frenchman but his language. No doubt the Spanish character of the Franche Comté population is the result of a long Spanish occupation, more than a couple of hundred years ago.

To go back to Léon Gérôme more particularly. He was, at the time I speak of, a tired, disillusioned-looking man, of fifty or thereabouts; full of energy and determination, for all the signs of fatigue—a man indeed who had learned at that time to concentrate his effort on the labours that he lived by and loved. Young though I was, he made me—in later visits—a confidant in this matter; and I remember the sadness of his wonderful brown eyes—surely Franche Comté eyes, and that means Spanish—when he said gravely, "*Le travail, il n'y a que ça.*" Nothing, I believe, disturbed in Gérôme the continuity of his work. Society, so far as he went into it —and he was honoured and sought for—

did not interfere in any way with his diligence. And he knew nothing of the modern affection of the nerves that the Germans call *Reise-fieber ;* so that on the morrow of a long journey into Eastern France he would set up his easel, early, and would work at once with steady mind and with firm hand. Altogether at home.

Some people have imagined, and have expressed their fancy, that the extent to which, in the painted productions of Gérôme, prominence is given to scenes of cruelty was necessarily an indication of something of the temperament of the man. Lust, savagery, brutality, these are certainly the elements of much of his work in Painting—they do not enter at all into the noble Sculpture of his later years, of which the capital example is the "Tanagra" of the Luxembourg—but I believe that few men really have been kinder or more considerate than this painter of frequent horrors; and a theory, more tenable perhaps than that which I have mentioned, would be, that, in artistic conceptions, one of the most natural things is reaction or revolt from one's real temperament. Take, for instance, in illustration, Henry Irving's not infrequent preference for melodramatic horrors, and contrast it with the almost feminine sensibility, the eminent

compassion, of the man. These melodramatic horrors—they were effective and interesting: nothing else, to the artist. And they took him furthest of all from his real self.

Gérôme's works in Painting have gone somewhat out of fashion, but the power of his draughtsmanship is as little to be denied as the power of the draughtsmanship of Ingres or of Legros, and his conceptions have been constantly dramatic. The very young School cannot appreciate Gérôme; but Gérôme has been able to appreciate the very young School; and, as a professor at the Beaux Arts, he was wont, I am told, and particularly in his more advanced years, to insist upon the acquisition, by his pupils, of the very virtues that he knew he was himself most without. The good opinion of the judicious has hardly been withdrawn from him, and there may return to him sooner or later the loud approval of the crowd.

While I am speaking of artists in Paris, let me refer to a friend I cannot forget—the well-known, much-esteemed American, of Irish birth, G. P. A. Healy, who, during many years—all of them much later than the time in which I was wont to see Gérôme—was, as were all his family, amongst the kindest, perhaps the most untiringly kind, of my friends in France. Not only was Mr. Healy—I call him

"Mr." because he was so much my senior—a delightful and constant and sunny-natured friend: his house in the Rue de la Rochefoucauld was an interesting one to go to, and that not only on his account and that of his children, and on that of the people accustomed in his day to be gathered within it, but also for its own sake, and because of its earliest associations. It was built by Louis the Fourteenth, for Madame de Maintenon, when the monarch was more or less *rangé*. It was then of course outside Paris—and a beautiful example of the late Louis Quatorze period it certainly was.

In Healy's studio, adjoining the house—but in no way in it, and numbered differently in the street—there were a number of portraits, or sometimes replicas of the first portraits, of distinguished people; a few of them English, but most of them either French or American, who had sat to the painter at one time or another during what became at last the couple of generations of his active and enthusiastic work. Presidents of the United States were to be seen upon the walls, and Healy had excellent stories about them. There was a very fine portrait—I should say in all probability really the finest ever painted of him—of Liszt. I am not sure there were not two portraits: one

of them showing the large but delicate, flexible fingers of the *virtuoso*, as they passed over the keyboard; the other, the aspect of him taken unawares, with a candle in hand, responding suddenly to a call made upon him at a late hour. I think it was thus—I think it was like that—that Mr. Healy first saw him.

Thiers sat to Healy, in Healy's middle day. Close to the Rue de la Rochefoucauld was the statesman's house, in the Place St. Georges; and there was Mme. Thiers, and his books, and his wife's sister, and his little bronzes. The portrait—shown at the Salon, where Healy was *hors concours*—was, though a good one, eclipsed by the prodigiously vigorous portrait by Bonnat. Still, Healy's had its delicate discrimination. Bismarck sat to Healy—who indeed, like Sir William Richmond in later days, went to stay with him in his country-house; and I used to hear stories of Bismarck, revealing what was then unexpected, and to everyone welcome—the kindlier and simpler side of the "man of iron's" character.

The eldest of Healy's daughters was married to a Frenchman of mark—a "Normalien" professor and journalist: Charles Bigot. Through his introduction, I was asked to a breakfast at Francisque Sarcey's, in the Rue de Douai. Sarcey was then at the height of his

reputation as a critic of the Theatre. It was his successful function to express with lucidity and emphasis the mind of the *bourgeois*—which was also his own. He did it with courage, and, for a whole generation, was, for actor and actress, an authority dreaded and liked. He was dreaded because he spoke his own fully common-sense mind very fearlessly. He was liked because he was *au fond, bon enfant:* ready to give a helping hand, where he could, without sacrifice of honesty. That was why the more intelligent of the younger actresses —who came to him for advice, and stayed to breakfast—embraced him, in the big studio: on his divan, and off it. His secretary, I am sure, misunderstood these ladies when he told me they imagined that their endearments affected the great man's utterance in his newspaper. No, no!—Sarcey was "*l'oncle Sarcey*"—privileged and petted, as the friend of the profession. That was all.

I remember that he was extremely genial with me; and I remember, too, he said to me the hardest thing a Frenchman ever said about the English Theatre:—"Dites donc! Chez vous, en Angleterre, *vous n'avez pas de Théâtre*, n'est-ce pas?" Later, he came to England, and found that we had Henry Irving.

VI

TENNYSON

I HAVE seen a little—not as much as I should like to have seen—of the great poets of my time: men, most of them, making their fame in a generation earlier than my own. Of these last, the moment has come to make mention.

I will begin with Tennyson, whom, if I remember rightly, I met twice only—but I met him in close quarters. It was the Season, roughly speaking thirty years ago, when he came up to London and took a house in Eaton Square; the date—interesting for another reason—was that of the publication of his great Ballad of "The Revenge" in the *Nineteenth Century;* and I heard him read that poem. That was the first time I met him. It was at a dinner at Stopford Brooke's; and I remember that I never felt more crushed by the mere presence of any human creature than I did, at first, in his company—he seemed to me such an extraordinary force, that had moulded so much of English Literature, and

English Thought—it was like being in contact with the Elements.

Notwithstanding his reputation for a behaviour severe and distant, Tennyson was, as a matter of fact, extremely kind, simple and pleasant, as far as my personal experience is concerned. He came into the Brookes' drawing-room in his morning jacket: uttering an apology for being, as he said, in "working clothes." His son Hallam—the present Tennyson—was with him. Among the guests—and they were few—were the Walter Cranes.

There had been some difficulty, Stopford Brooke told me, in getting Tennyson to come. The constitutional indolence, of which he was himself well aware, asserted itself continually. And besides, "What was he going to be given to drink?" On its being jocularly promised and arranged that he should have a bottle of old Port—the days were Claret-drinking days, remember, and Tennyson, in the matter of wine, was simply twenty years before his time—he said he would come. He *had* his bottle of old Port, which contained not a drop too much for him—for he became only more and more mellow under its genial influence.

Except his little apology for appearing in morning dress, I heard nothing that was said by him that night till he got down to dinner,

when on making an inquiry, natural at the time—the time of certain difficulties with Russia, that were occupying the public mind —Miss Brooke, who, in Manchester Square, was at the head of the table, said to him, "Mr. Tennyson, do you like the Russians?" In one of the deepest voices it was ever given to me to listen to, the answer came—"I hate them like the Devil."

After dinner—in the study, where he was happy with his pipe—he read us several of his poems. I have seen rather disparaging accounts of his manner of reading; but for my own part I consider it was not only perfectly individual—his own, and therefore interesting —but that it gave extraordinary weight, meaning, and music to the poems he had created. He read, or, if the word is more acceptable, he chaunted to us, a Lincolnshire dialect-poem—not the best known, and quite the kind of thing the ordinary reciter spoils— and a pathetic poem about the death, at sea, of a man who, being reproached by his wife for his flirtations with another, rushed out of the house, left her, was drowned—the sorrow of the wife for her hasty words and angry gesture, which caused the tragic end, was the burden of the piece.

Those two poems Tennyson read, and, as I

said, the ballad of *The Revenge*, which had just been written; and I remember it is not recorded in the Life of his father, by the present Lord Tennyson, how much the Laureate hesitated, at that time, to publish that poem; for, though he "hated" the Russians, he had a deep sense of his responsibility, and there was something almost touching in the way that he appealed to us as to whether the publication might not inflame public feeling. Every one in the room thought we could not be deprived—nobody wished to be deprived—of the last song of the prowess of England long ago; but Tennyson would not settle it at that moment; though the piece, if it was to appear, would have to be posted to the *Nineteenth Century* by midnight. He held Mrs. Walter Crane's hands —both her hands—"Dame" Crane's hands, I have now to say—when she bade Good-bye to him—he held them with a purpose—and he said, very earnestly, "You must promise not to tell anybody what you have heard. Come! you must promise—you are a woman, remember." It was perhaps a hint to all of us—that we should keep his secret.

The second time that I met Tennyson, was one afternoon, at Almond's Hotel in Clifford Street. I had gone there in response to Lord

Houghton's invitation to "a dish of tea." There were only eight or ten people. The Lord Tennyson of to-day accompanied his father — whose presence had been made known to me, or, at the least, was strongly suspected, by sight of the cloak of no particular period, and the hat that surely, in that day, could be Tennyson's only, hanging up in the hall. Lord Houghton was fond, as everybody knows, of trotting out young men whom he approved of; and he spoke to Tennyson about my *Pastorals of France*, and afterwards told me that really I must send the book to the great Laureate. I did it very reluctantly, if not indeed almost churlishly, with a curt line; for what had the writer of *In Memoriam* and the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* got to do with my prettyish embroideries —my "literary egg-dance"?—Harry Quilter's word. That was how I felt. And if my modesty was a little excessive, let me make up for it now.

VII

BROWNING

I SAW a great deal more of Browning than I ever saw of Tennyson; and it began by my doing what was an exceedingly unusual thing with me—introducing myself by a letter, not artfully concocted indeed, to meet an imaginary need, or to gratify an ambitious desire, but making an inquiry of deep and genuine interest to me, about the Abbé Vogler. Browning's great poem on that singular musician—one of the many splendid things in *Dramatis Personæ*—had but lately appeared.

He answered me, as was his wont—it is most characteristic of his correspondence generally—very courteously and fully; saying, amongst other things, that Abt Vogler had taught Meyerbeer counterpoint. One or two letters passed, and Browning asked me to go and see him, when I should come to town—at Warwick Crescent, the house overlooking the Canal at Paddington. Its situation, he, by this time a man of Fashion, and in great

request, deplored. He had so long a way to drive or trudge to his dinner-parties. He came there (I remember his telling me) when he first settled in London: he came there on account of the immediate neighbourhood of his wife's sister—Arabella Barrett.

From pictures, most of Mr. Browning's present-day admirers are familiar with the aspect of the house: an ordinary good stucco-covered house, in a not small nor badly built terrace, or just perceptibly curved Crescent: a house with dining-room in front, study behind, and above these a double drawing-room. In a dark corner of the dining-room, blinking from his perch, was Browning's favourite bird—an owl, in whose wisdom he professed unlimited belief. I have several times lunched there with Mr. Browning and his sister, and sometimes his son; the poet sitting facing the window, full of *bonhomie* and amusing stories, rather than of grave talk; eating sweets when occasion arose —declaring, men of genius *always* ate sweets —and making puns whenever he had an opportunity—somewhat apologetically. "But you don't like my puns," I remember his saying, when he had discovered that at least they were not the part of him that I most appreciated. Really I ought to have been reconciled

to them when, on one occasion, a visitor of the name of *Bain*, for whom he had no liking, having succeeded in seeing him, he came back from the interview with a jocose remark for me—"He is my *bane*, and you my antidote." But even *that* was not enough for me. I was incorrigible.

One day, while we were lunching, a visitor was announced—somehow was almost in the room before we knew it. Browning rose; greeted him; and then, if I remember rightly, the short remaining conversation took place in the passage, with the door open. The visitor was an Italian; and why I mention the thing is because I was so struck with the suddenness of the transition from the English man of the world to a very native, as it were, of Italy. Browning spoke Italian as he spoke French; not so much as an accomplishment, but as if the language belonged to him and were part of himself; his gesticulation and all his bearing helping the effect. It brought home to me, rather strangely, the suppleness of Browning's mind and nature—for the time, this olive-tinted, suave, loquacious person was an Englishman no more.

I remember a few of the things Browning said about contemporaries. And I remember that only one or two people have I ever heard

him disparage ; and then I am sure he thought there was cause enough to do so. A prominent criticism upon him, in one of the Quarterly Reviews, or one of the big monthlies, did distinctly annoy him. He felt the injustice of the denial to him of the quality and charm of musical sound—I mean, of the capacity to attain it. And on that matter—just because he felt it so strongly—he expressed himself rather lightly, I think. "As if *I* could not jingle rhymes as well as another!" said he.

Although he disliked, and even on occasion resented, very unfavourable verdicts on his work, I am sure that when one remembers the essential greatness of Browning's production—its massiveness, its range, its wide accomplishment, its complete penetration into unexplored worlds of character and sentiment, one cannot but feel that his own estimate of that work was, at bottom, modest. I remember his disclaiming any attempt to place his smaller things by the side of the greatest, even of single short or shortish poems, others had wrought. And I cannot forget the feeling with which he exclaimed—after having asserted the possession of a capacity for which some criticism scarcely gave him credit—"But of course I could never have written *Christabel.*

I could never have written *The Ancient Mariner.*"

Of poets small indeed beside the giant Coleridge—of well-intentioned dwarfs, practically—Browning was extremely tolerant, but never flattering. The sculptor Woolner's verse had been brought into a certain prominence at the time. He could not praise it, exactly; but "it was very nice that such a good fellow as Woolner should have the aspirations and all that."

He spoke to me, once at least, of Frederick Tennyson; that brother of the Laureate of Browning's time of whom he had seen a good deal in Florence. He held (as indeed the famous Alfred held strongly) that Frederick Tennyson had real gifts. His conversation, as Browning told me, was extremely interesting; very rich and suggestive. "When you heard him, you felt that he held in solution that which his brother had crystallized; and you were always expecting that he would crystallize too—but then he never did."

It is on record that Browning, who disliked —even to the point of unreasonableness, I think—the publication of Poetry amongst the miscellaneous contents of the magazines—allowed the issue of "Hervé Riel" in the *Cornhill* that he might pass on the honora-

rium to the English fund for the relief of the French soldiers suffering in the Franco-German War. It happens that he told me about it all, in detail. He wanted to give as much as his means at the time allowed him; but if he gave a good round sum, countless would have been the applications to him from the agents of all sorts of charities. So he decided to sink his customary objection to magazine issue, and take his poem to George Smith: telling his publisher and friend that he desired in this way to help the Fund. George Smith offered immediately a hundred guineas; thereby, in princely fashion, without advertisement or noise, associating himself with the gift. Browning was of course gratified. "All my life," he said, "the French have been giving me pleasure." He visited France often. There had been times when he had thought seriously of living in Paris.

It happens—though only in one case was it on Browning's own initiative—I became acquainted with several of the ladies—middle-aged for the most part—who at different times and under different circumstances, now in Italy and now in England, were among the poet's really intimate friends. There was Miss Isa Blagden, to whose villa, at Bellosguardo, Browning went a few days after his

wife's death. She had been in Florence Mrs. Browning's most intimate associate. I remember her staying with the Herbert Mayos—or, was it then the Miss Mayo's?—and telling me, before them, she had just had Swinburne discussing with her *Fifine at the Fair*—the new book. "But what is the moral of it?" she had asked that not particularly sensitive appreciator of a moral. "I only see the *im*-moral of it," Swinburne had replied. Both laughed; but Miss Blagden laughed unconvinced.

Then there was Mrs. Sutherland Orr, a sister of the poet's friend, Lord Leighton. She, with less humour than Miss Blagden, worshipped faithfully. Mrs. Orr wrote a Life and an exposition of Browning's poetry, quite excellent on their own lines.

Then, far less known to the Public, or to any section of the great world, was Miss Egerton Smith—the "A. E. S." to whose memory *La Saisiaz* was dedicated, and by reason of whose death it alone came to be written. Caring for Literature and serious thought, most of all was she an adept in "music's ways, vast, though winding." That was the great link. She was a perfect pianist. At her house, by Holland Park, she has played to me alone; and my copy of *The Ring and the*

Book has, pencilled in it, an inscription from her hand—because she was kind and I was young.

I have said before, that the house in which Browning lived during all his later stay in England, except the last year or two, may be known, more or less, "by pictures"; yet I doubt if any one more considerable than the pictorial journalist who chronicles the affair of the moment, has ever bethought him to make picture or drawing of that stucco-fronted house facing the Regent's Canal. That which has been reproduced—at all events the essential part of it—is the interior: the aspect of the large double drawing-room, for, not to speak of any other prints, I remember that a volume of Selections from Mrs. Browning's poems contained an illustration of their Florentine Salon, and the aspect of that apartment was practically reproduced in London. The furniture and the hangings, and all the objects about the place, were what they had been at the Casa Guidi; and the hangings were—for a modern Tyburnian abode—very remarkable. There were tapestries; the walls quite covered with them, and a fine bit of tapestry used, I remember, as a *portière*. They were Italian, of the Thirteenth, and Flemish of the Fifteenth Century—that did not go so

badly together. And I remember that long after Mr. Browning had told me about them, and interested me in them, I had pleasure in endowing my "Mr. Rutterby," in one of my imaginative sketches—*A Last Love at Pornic* —with those most admirable and characteristic things. I liked the association. The furniture itself, in Warwick Crescent, was much of it old Italian, richly or finely carved; blackened with age, or what not.

About the double drawing-room—with, in the middle of the smaller part of it, a grand piano over whose keyboard Browning's fingers sometimes only tentatively and meditatively wandered—he used, when I was alone with him, to pace (and when earnest and a little indignant, I have known him stalk), as he poured out, with interesting freedom, opinion, sentiment, narrative. Never, of course, courting, and seldom even suffering, discussion, or much mention even, of his poems when he was in the world, he spoke of them readily enough to any one, I have no doubt, who was genuinely interested, who saw him or was accustomed to see him at home. He told me, for instance, that the *Good News from Ghent*—with its movement of eager gallop—was written on shipboard — or composed. "Composed," "written," "finished." were one

and the same thing to him. A thing was "finished," for instance, when not a line had been set down. It was held in his head—all of it. Finished, not in the ordinary sense, but finished, or almost finished, in his own, was *The Ring and the Book*, when, quite early in 1868—if not in 1867—I was shown, in his study, the square, yellow book—the very pleadings in the case—the volume which has passed into the possession of Balliol College. I do not say—for that would have been impossible—that it was as finished as was the little poem, in *Asolando*, that Mrs. Bronson or her daughter tells of as having been composed during a drive, and then straightway recited before it had been written down at all. That was the outcome of some meditations on what seemed to Browning the inhuman treatment of bird and animal life—now in the interests of Fashion, and now of Science. As to Vivisection—which they both hated—he and Tennyson may have been right or may have been wrong, upon the matter. In either case—I admit it—feeble Human Nature, like my own, feels and avows an instinct to prefer the folly of great poets to the wisdom and the wide, deep outlook of the average medical man.

Kindness—unmeasured kindness and consideration—was characteristic of Browning,

eminently. I have seen his solicitude for Sarianna, his sister, who lived with him and kept house for him, from a few weeks after his father's death in Paris to the last days in the Palazzo Rezonnico. She returned to the full his affection. And when Browning's son was an Oxford undergraduate—though Browning was far too sensible to desire that the boy should not feel his own feet, in his passage through his now expanding world—there were moments at which one knew that it was out of his own experience that the poet had devised for the *Ring and the Book* those telling interruptions in the Advocate's absorption in his work—his thought returning, willy-nilly, to his child :—

> "I trust Cinnuzzo ties on tippet, guards
> The precious throat on which so much depends!"

The published records of Browning, which tell abundantly, conclusively, of his extreme regard for Tennyson—of his admiring affection for him—indicate, I think, less clearly his attitude towards a contemporary not less great—Charles Dickens. But Dickens got from Browning his due. And Dickens—who valued, and had valued during a generation, Browning's poetry—valued also his sagacity and discretion. The poet happened to mention to me that when the novelist was in some

doubt as to the reception that might be meted out to—shall I call it his most ambitious?—certainly his most dramatic Reading—the "Sikes and Nancy," from *Oliver Twist*, it was himself alone who was invited to join Fechter in sitting in close judgment, anxiously, at a rehearsal of the tremendous episode.

VIII

SWINBURNE

IT was at Lord Houghton's house—a house he hired one season in Bruton Street—that I first saw Swinburne. Being Swinburne, he was of course immediately communicative, enthusiastic and agreeable—his interest in things emphasized a little, or at least the appearance of it, by a slight quivering movement, as if every thought suggested to him some fresh memory, some fresh excitement.

I remember asking him whether he was as devoted as ever to Walter Savage Landor. As a youth—the reader will know—Swinburne made a pilgrimage to Florence on purpose to see Landor; and now the classic veteran—master of neat verse and stately prose—was long dead. "It is my one hope," said Mr. Swinburne. "It is my one aspiration—I look forward to seeing Landor in the Isles of the Blessed."

After a lapse of many years, save for a chance meeting on one occasion—I think at a theatrical performance; probably that of the

Elizabethan Stage Society (for he was never an ordinary playgoer)—I saw Swinburne again, in the summer of 1897 : lunching with him and Theodore Watts-Dunton, at their villa at Putney. We talked, of course, of Poetry ; and at luncheon Theodore Watts-Dunton said that was a good sonnet of his friend's that my daughter and I had chosen for reproduction in *Poems of the Love and Pride of England*—an anthology of patriotic things. It was a poem Swinburne had published in the *Athenæum :* the one beginning, "New Year, be good to England!" Swinburne answered Watts-Dunton only by saying "You have written a hundred much better."

After luncheon, I talked to Watts-Dunton a little, in the long, narrow garden which had a statue, a grey stone statue, at the end of it—giving to the place, in a simple way, a touch of distinction, an association with the Past and with Beauty, that the suburban garden generally lacks.

Afterwards, we went upstairs to Swinburne's study, and found him supremely happy, and as busy as a man could be, over his early editions of the Elizabethan Dramatists. Several of the rarest and least known —the rare editions of most rare men—he showed me with enthusiasm and pride ; read-

ing out or reciting a line here and a line there, and criticizing always favourably, and generally shrewdly, by the way. I am not Bibliophile enough to know, but I suspect that his collection of the Elizabethans was as memorable as is Edmund Gosse's cabinet of the Dramatists of the Restoration.

IX

WILLIAM MORRIS AND OTHERS

WILLIAM MORRIS I had a few dealings with: professional, so to speak, on his part, as well as social. The first time that I saw him, it was à propos of the furnishing of our small dining-room, in Church Row, Hampstead. I had chosen practically everything myself; but his people had sent me a carpet which made me ill. They said that it was all right: I, that it was all wrong; and the upshot of it was that Morris wrote to me to say he would come himself to see it.

He came. It was not then upon the floor. He talked about pictures; about old Church Row; looked at the *Liber Studiorum* prints upon the walls—took particularly kindly to the print called "Hedging and Ditching," which represents a cold, clay country, poplars, bare fields and "pollard labourers," as Ruskin well calls them. Mr. Rawlinson does not like it; and it has its faults—and its charm also. "There must be a pleasant walk beyond that turn of the road," Morris said; pointing to the

path on the low hill-side. "And now about the carpet." It was brought into the room: laid down. Morris backed himself against the wall, to note the effect of it. A moment, and he looked at me expressively. A tragic disillusion. "Roll it up," he said. We rolled it up, and there was the end of that matter.

I think the next time that I saw Morris was several years afterwards, at lunch at the Henry Arthur Jones's. We had come, half a dozen of us, in an informal way, for the sake of hearing a new, unacted play. So, the meal over, we went up into the study, which I had known previously as Alma Tadema's studio. For we had been at that house under three tenancies, so to speak—first, as the guest of Edmund Gosse soon after his marriage, when he was *locum tenens* for Tadema; then several times when the Tademas themselves were at home; and now as guests of the Henry Arthur Jones's, who had lately come into London from the country.

Bernard Shaw was there, I recollect, and I conjecture that one is always the merrier when he is present—and the more optimistic. It must have been to define at once Shaw's work and the character of his talk, that there came into existence—and I say it pleasantly—the proverb, "Nothing happens but the unforeseen."

That day, at Jones's, we formed a semi-circle in the study; Morris making himself particularly happy with his pipe, which he filled with tobacco from a pouch of wondrous art workmanship and noble, satisfactory colour.

Jones read his play with energy, and we were all appreciative. It was the piece called *Wealth*, and it was destined for the Haymarket—where indeed it duly appeared, in the earlier days of the Beerbohm Tree management. But "Henry Arthur" has got far beyond that piece, now; interesting, human and dramatic though no doubt it was. I do not think that its production had any great influence upon the fortunes of the theatre—which *The Dancing Girl* distinctly raised. Some of the scenes were made effective; but, if I remember rightly, the rather slow methods of Tree did not seem suited to the vehemence of feeling, and to the situations, intended by the author. I think I remember Jones telling me that Tree had said to him he could not get on very well with the part as it was written. "You must give me a few more *planks*," he had said. They were given. I think that Jones formed the impression, in the end, that he had given Tree too many. The skill of Sir Herbert, in character acting, and his imaginative power, no one, I think, appre-

ciates more distinctly than I do; but the inequality of his art is one of his characteristics, and unless I am mistaken, it was discovered—it was laid bare—in *Wealth*. Again, if I remember rightly, Lady Tree—a woman accomplished and clever—was singularly colourless and ineffective in her part in this piece. Had there been some one there, with more of impulse, perhaps the thing might have been different. As it was, I remember nothing in Lady Tree's performance (she was not "Lady" Tree in those days) that was quite satisfactory—artist though she undoubtedly is; intelligent to the finger-tips; and having fortunately scored, since then, distinguished successes—of which the one which rises first to my own mind, was not at her husband's theatre, but at the Shaftesbury, where she played with Lewis Waller and his wife, Miss Florence West.

Lewis Morris — William Morris's quite well-known namesake—when one met him in Society—I met him at Lady Lindsay's and elsewhere—never particularly, if even at all, suggested the poet. But then, upon the surface, Browning did not do that. Only, even in moments when he was saying pleasant things to dull but well-placed elderly women at parties or Private Views, you still did

somehow feel there was the poet—the great poet, too—behind the citizen of the world and the adept at acceptable small-talk. Lewis Morris was more reticent, yet a man of the world also; sensible, thoughtful, and considerate—that above everything.

I have named Lady Lindsay in connection with Lewis Morris. May I leave poets a moment—but I am not leaving them, since I am talking of Lady Lindsay herself—may I leave the others then, and say that at Lady Lindsay's, I have sat, on one night, next to the daughter of Dickens, and on another, next to the daughter of Thackeray. How much each is her father's child! At Lady Lindsay's too, I met, almost in his last days—but No: it was just before he issued to his private friends the remarkable book on Byron (scarcely a grandson's tribute, but the truth had to be told) —Lord Lovelace, dapper, neat and kindly: very pleasant company indeed; and that old friend of Lady Lindsay's, Mr. Lecky, who in the physical sense towered benevolent and bland, above every group in which he found himself, but I was not for my own part fortunate enough to strike oil in my conversation with him. And now, back to the poets, and a final word.

I never felt the music of Alfred Austin's

verse as much—though I have felt it, certainly, from time to time—as when the Laureate read a short selection from his poetry, to the members of the Royal Society of British Artists and their friends, in the summer of 1897 or 1898. Work, and an eager, active temperament exercised over many years—and mainly, one must say, in political writing for the *Standard* newspaper—had at that time clearly told on him, and he wanted strength; his voice was weak, not to say hoarse and rocky. He wanted chest power, and flexibility—which last might have been got, I should have thought, by the mere habit of public speech or public reading. At once I liked the man, and the thing he was doing—with whatever temporary deficiencies in the "production" of his work. He was lucid; he was intensely in earnest; he felt deeply the music of which he was delivering himself, and at the end we were charmed. My delightful and sympathetic old friend, Sir Wyke Bayliss—then President of the Society—got up to propose a vote of thanks to Alfred Austin, with artful simplicity: "loth," as he said, to "break the spell"—but the thanks had got to come.

Of younger poets, chief of them William Watson—interesting continually, and great, beyond a doubt, in *Wordsworth's Grave* and in

the *Ode on the Coronation of King Edward the Seventh*—and of Rudyard Kipling, no item of whose vivid writing can be needed to increase the gratitude that is due to him for the *Recessional*—I could willingly say something; having studied the best of their work with admiration and sympathy. But they belong, as a word I have already used has implied—and as the reader knows of course—to a later generation. They are eminently of the Present; and, I hope it may be, of the Future. Therefore, they are not for this book.

X

FREDERICK LOCKER

À PROPOS of something he had read, I think, in my early volumes, *Studies in English Art*, I had a note from Frederick Locker, asking me to come and see some of his treasures, in the tall, narrow, Chesham Street house—a house of the 'Thirties or of the early 'Forties, I must suppose—where he abode. I was there more than once: once by daylight, I think, seeing drawings, two or three of which were of a certain importance; others perhaps rather insignificant. What interested me most were his bookbindings—objects of Art with which I was in the main unfamiliar. They had their fascination, and Locker—Locker-Lampson he had not then become—guarded them with reverent care. They were by various men, in various periods.

I remember asking with particular solicitude, Had he any Trautz-Bauzonnet's?—for an authority had told me what in later years some little acquired knowledge and experience have led me to confirm: that of the bookbinders

of the generation that at the time of our conversation had just closed, Trautz-Bauzonnet was the best. I do not think Locker, though admiring his work, put him in an exceptional place. For myself — following my earlier informant—I shall still venture to put and to retain him there. For perfection of craftsmanship, France leads; and it was Trautz-Bauzonnet who led in France. What other binder shows quite that neatness and precision, quite that reticence, quite that taste never at fault, quite that delicacy of ornament never obtruded, quite that simplicity of beauty never departed from? For me, a binding by Trautz-Bauzonnet — Janséniste, if possible — reaches the very highest of discreet levels in his charming craftsman's art.

Locker, I think, had liked my interest in George Cruikshank — an interest justifiable enough, I hope, as far as it went, but an interest that time has not increased. He sent me an impression of a latish Cruikshank plate that belonged to him—that was wrought for him—a plate fertile in fancy, and full of agile touch — "Fairy Connoisseurs inspecting Mr. Locker's Collection of Drawings." It represents the graceful, piquant side—a rare side, certainly—in Cruikshank's art. He sent me also, very kindly, either then or later—or No:

he, rightly, did not send me, but told me where I could obtain them at threepence apiece, or thereabouts—a dainty little selection of those charming small prints after drawings by Stothard for *The Novelists' Magazine*, which appeared towards the end of the Eighteenth Century, and realized delightfully the "interiors" of their day, and those who peopled them. So apprised, I trudged down to the little shop, and laid hands on a dozen, or so, while I could. My little Stothards—the ones I had liked best—were illustrations to the great novel of Richardson's. *Clarissa*—that the giant Balzac loved and swore by—does not require to be named. Of *Clarissa*, these little pictures render all the grace and pleasantness. Nothing of the passion, of course. Passion was outside Stothard.

Dining with Locker, I remember the only other guest was General Hamley—quiet but interesting; quiet *and* interesting, I ought rather to say. His writings for *Blackwood*—military and, of necessity I suppose, in some degree political—had been attracting a good deal of attention.

That Frederick Locker was a most pleasant host, may be concluded easily. He was chatty and unexacting, and variously informed. At every hour, doubtless, he was considerate and

amiable. Mrs. Locker—equally unexacting —struck me as a profounder nature; and that nature was suggested in part by the tranquillity of her grace. I diagnosed her—not, I think, with undue optimism—as a woman absolutely high-minded, curiously good. Locker, with his particular gifts of perception and performance—Locker, whom *London Lyrics*, urbane and neat and friendly, in great measure expressed—would have been the last to think himself upon quite her level. Those are almost pathetic little verses in which he avows his fondness of affection for a new-born son, of whom, in pleasant modesty, he does not feel himself worthy to be the father.

XI

LINKS WITH THE PAST

OLD Lady Castletown of Upper Ossory, sitting, one Winter, in her sunny drawing-room in Brunswick Terrace, at Brighton, told me that she felt herself to be moored, then, in a backwater of Life. "When I was in the world" was a favourite phrase of hers—prefacing something—something interesting—as to the difference in the times. Her years, that Brighton Winter that I was accustomed to call on her, were about five-and-eighty.

Lady Castletown told me she was at the Coronation of the great Queen, and there, in Westminster Abbey, lost a fan that had been given to her mother by Marie Antoinette. It made her—to my mind—like Henry Vaughan, and, in a certain sense, like Lord Houghton, a link with the Past.

But—like Lord Houghton: unlike Henry Vaughan—she retained her interest in the Present; and one of several reasons why I think of Lady Castletown gratefully, is that she shared with Sir James Knowles, Arthur

Symons, and a sometime Acting Manager of the Empire Theatre, a certain liking for my imaginative letter "To Nancy"—"Nancy" was a young dancer at the music-halls. "It is very touching," said Lady Castletown; and that pleased me. Arthur Symons had the story, such as it was, for the *Savoy*. Knowles read it there, and wished that I had sent it him. And with the appreciation of an Acting Manager —who knew familiarly the subject—thrown in on the top of all this, I am amused to feel, as I do sometimes feel, demonstratively indifferent to the views of the suburbs.

Henry Vaughan—a second link with the Past, and some of it of extreme remoteness —was the man, who though not exactly the founder, may be described as in all his later years the "Father" of the Burlington Fine Arts Club—Henry Vaughan, the collector and connoisseur who lived, very lonely, in Cumberland Terrace—who gave during his lifetime Constable's "Hay Wain" to the National Gallery. He was a connoisseur in age as much as in his leisurely youth or middle years: perhaps indeed more delicate than ever in his judgments, even if a little old-fashioned, when I knew him well, in his long later days. A collector then scarcely at all; a collector rather in the days of "Mr."

Turner, "Mr." Cox, "Mr." Fielding and "Mr." de Wint. He visited Turner more than once, I should suppose; but undoubtedly once, in the house in Queen Anne Street which now bears the tablet of the Society of Arts. His recollections of the painter were agreeable, but not perhaps very distinctive; I fear they will not bear re-telling—they are too weakly in my mind; but the impression Turner gave him was certainly a pleasant one.

Constable, Vaughan can hardly have known, but he knew and had great regard for the work of Constable's biographer, Leslie; and he knew Constable's daughters, who lived in Hamilton Terrace—across the Regent's Park from his house—and he very kindly sent me there to them when I was writing on Constable for the French magazine, *L'Art*. I remember to this day, happily, the genial sunshine of Isabel Constable's presence. In it one basked. She was as delightful in her age as she must have been in her youth, when, to her qualities as a girl and a daughter, dutiful and sweet, the great, saddened painter paid fatherly and willing tribute.

In Henry Vaughan, more than ninety years old when he departed, I had a friend who was actually a little in touch with Coleridge. But Vaughan's references to "Mr." Coleridge were,

to tell the truth, never quite satisfactory. He went, he has told me, with two or three others who happened to know Mr. Gillman of Highgate, to the abode of the surgeon—in the later years of Coleridge's residence with him. Mr. Vaughan's reverence for great Literature was, I fancy, by no means on a par with his reverence for great pictorial Art; and I gather that he took it rather ill, that on going to tea with Mr. Coleridge "Mr. Coleridge talked all the time." That was all he remembered.

Speaking to Vaughan one day, about the Stage, I recollect asking him—when the great actor had been thirty years before the London public—"Have you ever seen Henry Irving?" Vaughan paused a moment; gave a tranquil smile—as if the contingency was improbable. I must have seemed very young to him, to put the query at all. "No"—he said, at last—"I have never seen that gentleman. I have seen Mrs. Siddons—*driving round the Regent's Park.*"

Partly with a view to exercise and health, and partly with a view to monetary prudence —the prudence of the old when they are also the rich—the excellent Henry Vaughan was, almost until the last, accustomed to walk home—and entirely unaccompanied—from the brightness of the West End streets into the

distant vastness and the gloom of the Park in which he had beheld Mrs. Siddons. He held that Cumberland Terrace—notwithstanding its Art treasures—was not a place in which he could dine cheerfully. Three times a week he dined at the Athenæum—three times a week in the somewhat different *décor* of the Blue Posts in Cork Street. To Henry Vaughan, one of the attractions of that distinguished tavern was its nearness to the Burlington Fine Arts Club. Eminently creditable. Another was its saddle of mutton—which was of peculiar tenderness. He knew the days of the week when the saddle would be forthcoming, and those were the days on which the Athenæum was without attractions for him. Then, on the Sunday, he would sup, penitently, at home.

I have spoken before—incidentally—of Lord Houghton; one of the occasions on which I met Tennyson having been at his rooms. That was at Almond's Hotel, in Clifford Street, during one of Lord Houghton's briefer sojourns in London. "George Eliot" and her long-time associate, George Henry Lewes, were of the little party. I knew Lewes's son, Charles Lewes—a child of his early marriage—extremely well at that time, but had never before happened to see "George

Eliot's" friend. One has heard, of course, all sorts of versions of his character and bearing. To some people, I am obliged to conjecture that he was very distasteful. Me he impressed pleasantly. He was simple, friendly, talkative almost to loquacity—if one may call a man loquacious who is all the time saying what it is worth while to listen to.

With him, as I say—two or three yards from him perhaps, in the sitting-room in Clifford Street—was the grave figure of "George Eliot": a woman, it must be avowed, of extreme physical ugliness, but delightful in manner, of careful yet natural conversation, of not too laboured profundity, and curiously deferential in her reception of crude things said to her by crude young people like myself: one would almost have thought it an affectation—so marked was it; but I think it was part of the character; I think it was sincere, though undeserved.

My knowledge of Lord Houghton was scarcely, I suppose, got at the period at which he was capable of the best of his work; or perhaps it was that the number and diversity of his interests seemed to scatter his mind a little, so that substantive achievement was no longer his aim. But he was of remarkable social brightness, as well as kindliness;

and though he seldom pursued even the most interesting of subjects, in conversation, for any considerable time, he was sure to say something pregnant about everything under discussion. I think it is very likely one failed sometimes to do justice to his remark because, in a moment, some other matter was on the *tapis*, and that occasion for appreciation succeeded by something else. The change was kaleidoscopic.

One of the houses at which I had the pleasure of going to him was a house on the west side of Arlington Street. Its early Georgian double drawing-room it would scarcely have been difficult to recognize (even if Lord Houghton had not reminded me, a lover of Hogarth, of the fact) as the scene of the first picture in the "Marriage à la Mode" series.

I forget whether it was at that house, or in Brook Street or Bruton Street, that at an evening party I first saw Mr. Gladstone, grave, polished, quiet, courteous, earnest always; and, on the same occasion, the famous "Jersey Lily" of that Spring or Summer—Mrs. Langtry, in the brief but brilliant days when she was first in Society, before she took to the Stage. I think it was in her first season that I saw her; possibly in her second. The cordial

appreciation of Royalty had already done much to make Mrs. Langtry famous, and she had just been painted, I think by Poynter and by Watts. The simplicity of the woman in Watts's portrait—his portrait of her when still very young—is in itself an admirable instance of the refinement and high idealization of this great master of painting and of thought. Mrs. Langtry struck me, as of course she struck everybody, as extremely good-looking; perhaps even as unique; the style at all events was an uncommon one; but to say of her, thirty years ago, or more, that she was the most beautiful of women, was almost, if not quite as silly as it would have been to say the same, twenty years later, of Miss Edna May, or, a year or two since, of Miss Elsie. Her rich brown hair, her large eyes, violet-coloured, her shoulders, the poise of her head—these were perhaps her points. Mrs. Langtry's conversation did not seem remarkable—but had it the very slightest occasion to be?

At breakfast, much more markedly of course than at his large evening parties, it was Lord Houghton's pleasure to bring into meeting people whom one would have considered incongruous. They "shook down" together, nearly always, however; Lord Houghton's perfect amiability and notable many-sidedness

greatly aiding the process. The hardest thing that could be said, or was said, about that house—that *salon*—really so hospitable and pleasant, was that the eccentric were apt to be supported—or suffered. But I think that they were suffered mainly that they might be understood.

Lord Houghton knew the very last story about the last man of mark. He knew also the place it was at the particular moment deemed desirable to go to. His answer to a note of mine, saying that, alas! a very obstinate bronchitis prevented me from staying with him at Fryston, was, that for obstinate bronchitis, Fryston was not as good as the West Indies. When hardly another Englishman and very few Frenchmen knew Le Cantal, just south of Auvergne, Lord Houghton could expatiate on its noble mountains, and had apparently endured its ignoble inns. The latest explorer was at Lord Houghton's breakfasts, and the latest visionary; along of course with many, many people of solid power and inevitable fame. It was said of our admirable friend—in allusion, obviously, to his at least occasional gay preference for the unexpected—that if Judas Iscariot had appeared in London, Lord Houghton would have asked him to breakfast. The force of that remark

lies in the application of it. It cannot be taken seriously.

These large breakfasts—for generally a dozen or fourteen men were present at each of them—were entertainments in direct succession to those of Samuel Rogers. Your attendance implied a not professionally occupied morning; for they began at half-past ten and lasted until some people were thinking, or would generally have been thinking, about lunch. The institution was not, to all the world, precisely convenient; but the occasion was agreeable invariably, because your host was delightful, and your fellow-guests were at their best.

A chapter whose *raison d'être* is "links with the Past"—and social links more particularly—should hardly close without the briefest reference to the seventh Duke of Rutland, who died less aged than Henry Vaughan, but much, much older than Lord Houghton, and long afterwards. Known through, roughly speaking, three-quarters of his life as Lord John Manners, he was—as Lord John, and afterwards as the Duke—a real personal friend (he had also been a Minister) of the great Queen. About the Queen's early life, as Sovereign—with Lord Melbourne guiding her steps (Lord Melbourne,

who proved more equal than it was supposed he would be, to supporting quite creditably his delicate relations with a youthful and impulsive Monarch)—the Duke told me more than one interesting thing.

I surmised, rather than actually heard, that with his late Majesty, King Edward the Seventh, the Duke — thrown naturally, by reason of years, much less into intercourse— was in less perfect sympathy than with the great and aged lady King Edward had followed. But son and Minister were alike in revering the Sovereign who had gone; and I remember the Duke spoke gratefully of solicitude shown him by the King at the Coronation. "He would not let me kneel." That was in kindly consideration of growing infirmity.

The Duke of Rutland's advanced age—in which he kept his mental alertness and his simple serenity—was unaccompanied by any disability to play the part of a host. It was agreeable, for instance, to see the serious and sustained interest he would throw into a conference with his young neighbour, the Marquis of Exeter. He breakfasted with his guests, and at no particularly advanced hour. He did not separate himself from them more than a man of forty would have done, in *any* large

house that must put forth throughout the day its hundred claims on its owner's attention. Telling little improvements—in which no doubt Lady Victoria Manners had a hand—were being made, to the last. The artistic eye of Lord Wemyss had discovered a point of view that wanted a seat—and it got it. After lunch, on a Sunday, there would be a visit to the gardens, the dairy, and the stables; and for a favourite mare there would be "tit-bits" from the Duke—and a pat.

Habits at Belvoir were relatively unaffected by the vogue of the moment. It was one of the places in which—when I was there—it was possible for one to feel not quite "out of it" because one never played Bridge. The groups of guests were pleasantly divided—tactfully broken up—and if, here, there were Cards, there one could be the listener and the witness to a charade in French, excellently carried forward by Mr. Brinsley Marlay and Miss Elspeth Campbell—or, it might be, Lady Marjorie Manners.

XII

MORE "LINKS"

IN the earlier days of my occasional attendance at Lord Houghton's parties, the full rank of "Ambassador" was not, I think, accorded to, or claimed by, the official representative of the United States. Who he was I forget; but officially he was "the Minister of the United States," if I remember rightly. But by the time that America sent to us one of the most distinguished of her men of Letters, and one of the most sympathetic—a literary artist charged to the full with the appreciation of the Literature and ways of England, a man of singular conservatism of thought, and of a taste refined and chastened —I have now I suppose named, or indicated, Mr. Lowell—her Minister had reached the higher grade. It would hardly have been possible to avoid meeting Mr. Lowell at this or that set "function"; but it happens that it was only once I met him in close quarters, and that was at the house at Chelsea which his countrywoman, Mrs. Lea Merritt—the

author of one of the most acceptable and gracious of the pictorial allegories now visible at the Tate Gallery—had, if I may quote her own description of it to me, "built round her things." The words did ill justice to the architectural quality of the "Cottage," which, when Mrs. Merritt retired into Hampshire, passed into the possession of Mr. Percy Bigland—the deft producer of many portraits and of an admirable and well-observed record of a "Quaker's Meeting"—but they were characteristic of Mrs. Merritt's modesty.

In that place, Lowell was at home. He was recognized, of course, as intrinsically too good a talker, too really genial a participator in the give and take of social and familiar intercourse, to have, at any particular moment, on any particular occasion, to "produce himself" and live up to a certain reputation. It was his wont to be natural and at rest. He did not scintillate. But little gleams of Fancy illumined his thought; his meditation, his most homely reflection, took an imaginative form—I remember, for instance, his dilating to me upon the romance that, to any one who had just passed over from the American climate to the English, attended upon his every walk in street or country. Our mist-veiled world, he said, held for him always the

promise of adventure and the charm of remoteness. In Boston, in the clear, thin air, almost from the beginning he could see his journey's end. In London, and about our farm-lands and great country parks, he was a wanderer with the unknown and unimagined always before him; and to have returned from a single hour's stroll was to have returned—so Lowell averred—from nothing less than a great separating experience.

In England, and also, as it happens, in America, I saw something of another "link with the Past"—something of Oliver Wendell Holmes. I had already seen him before I was invited to deliver at Harvard a discourse on "Modern Life in Modern Art," the "argument" of which, if I may call it argument, was, in my estimation, somewhat wanted, in what was at that time—as far as "Art" is concerned—our rather allegory-ridden, legend-ridden, tradition-ridden England. In 1885, it was unacceptable here. *Now*, it would not be in the least required; every theme of Modern Life being by this time recognized as a possible theme for the artist. But in America there was no such prejudice to overcome as that which existed amongst us—thanks, mainly, I suppose, to Academic criticism and teaching. In America it had

not occurred to them that only the Past, or only the unreal, must be the theme of Painting. Dr. Holmes then—reading in his Boston paper the report of my by no means inspired or peculiarly enlightened remarks—was at all events not displeased with them; and he called on me, at the Hôtel Vendôme, specially to tell me so, and when he came over to England for his "hundred days," a year or two later, and realized the desire of something like half a century to revisit some haunts of his student life and to see a few things he had not known in the reign of William the Fourth, I visited him at Brown's Hotel, and "took" him, one afternoon, at his desire—but it was the blind leading the blind—to see some places associated with Goldsmith and, above all, with Johnson. I was no specialist in these matters —in fact so very little did I know about them in any detail, myself, that I betook me, in advance, to the house of the Royal Society of Arts, to find there an antiquary as well versed in the knowledge of old literary London as was another friend of mine, now lately dead, alas!—William Loftie. It was Mr. Wheatley who, at the Society of Arts, gave me the information not then so readily at every one's command as it would be to-day. And so, after visiting the Temple Church

with Dr. Holmes, and visiting the spot most associated with Goldsmith, we went on to Gough Square, out of Fleet Street, and were received amiably by the occupants of the abode in which the great Dr. Johnson wrote his Dictionary.

There was a certain quaintness about Dr. Holmes. He was affable, natural, and assuredly sincere—retaining in old age much freshness of interest. But for anything further —of more weight and moment—than pleasant social intercourse, a story mildly comical, a simple narrative told lucidly, one would, as I conceive it, have at that time looked in vain. Holmes was a veteran whose work was done —whose effort had been undertaken and finished. Boston had made much of him, during a full generation. He was one of those who, in earlier days, had brought her her literary renown, and no one could begrudge him his position as in his latest years her adored, I need not say her "spoilt," child. "Spoilt" he was not, by any means—he had too much sagacity, good sense, sense of proportion, to be spoilt really. And I have no difficulty in persuading myself that the gifted, keenly intelligent old man knew that, though well equipped indeed—happy, informed, and balanced—even the creator of

Elsie Verner was not quite so great as Boston had got to think him.

Another light of Literature—W. G. Howells—I have lunched with at Lady Seton's. But indeed I had seen him before that in America, and he had sent me, wisely, because of "local colour," to the Bowery Theatre in New York.

A word now for two Hampstead friends—Mrs. Sharp and Margaret Gillies.

Mrs. Sharp was a niece of Samuel Rogers, that kindly and sagacious banker who ensured immortality for one edition of his verses—the "Poems" of 1834—by seeing that they were illustrated by the most refined of all possible little landscape prints made after drawings which he commissioned Turner to execute. I have said that Rogers was "kindly." I know that he had the character of saying malicious things about people, in his very low voice, whenever he went into Society; but I know too that, when accused of doing so, he gave as his excuse that, with a voice so feeble, he would have no chance of being listened to at all, if he did not speak scurrilously.

This venerable distributor of the discrediting anecdote had a profound admiration for Samuel Johnson, and hearing, when he was himself old, that there was some one living who had talked with Johnson, Rogers desired

that he should be sought out and brought to him. And this was done. Now I will confess to the reader, that being myself as great an admirer of Johnson as Rogers was—as Mr. Birrell is—it is a little pleasure to me, in my later day, to know that I have touched the hand of a lady whose uncle, Rogers, whom she knew familiarly, had touched the hand of the unnamed acquaintance who had touched the hand of Dr. Johnson. Only one remove further, there are Burke, Reynolds, and Garrick—the elect society of the latter half of the Eighteenth Century in England.

But then, in knowing a little that delightful Lady Castletown, I touched the hand of one whose mother had touched the hand of Marie Antoinette. . . . Enough of these babblings!

Miss Gillies, a venerable woman who in the 'Seventies and early 'Eighties of the Nineteenth Century still exhibited graceful and sentimental drawings at the Shows of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, had, in the 'Thirties, been a visitor at Rydal Mount, and had painted at least one doubtless elaborate and at the time very popular miniature of Wordsworth. Wordsworth had taken to her: had found her—so I gathered from her humorous and modest talk of early days

—both a convenience and a pleasure. In ways slow, formal, ceremonious, quite his own, Wordsworth had given evidence of his sense of the young woman's utility and charm.

Instances shall be cited.

Walking alone with her to church one day, as soon as they were well started, the Poet Laureate gave Miss Gillies to understand that he had become conscious he was too thinly clothed; that he feared taking a chill while sitting in church; and that he had devised a plan by which she could come to his help. "Margaret" must sit very close to him—he gave her to understand—and he trusted, sincerely, that her skirts were ample enough to envelop and protect his legs. There must be no mincing matters—Margaret's skirts must be well round him. His behest was fulfilled, and an attack of rheumatism discreetly averted. But it appears that the parish clergyman did say, afterwards, "How badly you were behaving—you and Miss Gillies!"

On the morning of Margaret Gillies's leaving Rydal Mount, a matter of some moment seemed to occupy the elderly poet. He had become attached to Miss Gillies, and, like the very human person that it may be the author of *The Leech Gatherer* and the

Ode on the Intimations of Immortality was accustomed to prove himself, in the intimacy of his home, he was of opinion that the conventional or even the more ardent hand-shake would be but an inadequate expression of his sentiments towards his young friend—on her departure. In plain English, he was bent upon kissing her. Some men would have deemed it wiser to forgo this satisfaction. Others would have settled the matter out of hand. It was characteristic of the ever dutiful and meditative poet, that he referred the matter to Mrs. Wordsworth. And so impartial and admirable a Court of Appeal did he find in her, that she pronounced immediately in favour of the embrace. I imagine the poet making it plain to Miss Gillies that it must be clearly understood that his wife "associated herself"—as a Frenchman might have put it—with this parting salutation.

XIII

ARTISTS AT HAMPSTEAD

I HAVE known, on the whole, I think, remarkably little of English painters and sculptors ; seeing that so much of my life has been not unwillingly devoted to the study, and to the encouragement of the study, of the arts that are their profession. Certain of my critical friends have a nodding acquaintance, perhaps even as much as a Club *camaraderie*—which is not very compelling after all, for I call it the weak " understudy " of a friendship that counts—they have one or other of these relations—the slighter or the less slight—with everybody who puts anything of his own into a frame. When anybody begins to show a disposition to put something, not by another, into a frame, that is my signal for avoiding him.

But, of course, there are a hundred exceptions. If chance—if the accident of social intercourse—brings you into relation with a painter of genius, with a sculptor of high talent—shall I say rather, with any artist in

any Art (including one's own) as to whom there is cause to believe that he is markedly individual: himself, and not the copy or the uninteresting modification of another—what good reason would it be possible to urge for not profiting by the opportunity? I, at least, know of none. Nor am I so silly as to conjecture that all of a great man that is worth knowing is enclosed within the achievement of his art. The greater he is, and the more genuinely distinguished, the more of himself has he got into his art undoubtedly; but the whole of himself he will, in every case, have been utterly unable to get into it. Therefore, we are to suspect ourselves, rather than the person of whom the remark is made, when we assert—and it is often asserted—"A Celebrity is so disappointing." A celebrity in the Arts is of course meant. But a celebrity need not be disappointing, unless he is a celebrity who does not deserve to be one. And many such there are, without a doubt. And, of the justified celebrity, it is but fair to remember that he cannot possibly trot out for our particular benefit, under the chance circumstances of social intercourse, anything that in quality of thought, of feeling, or of charm, can vie with that which was vouchsafed to the happy moment of inspiration or was the result

of the meditative and laborious hour, the careful labour of the file.

Again, it may not be amiss—because it is conducive to the refreshment of novelty—to see less of those whose arts are akin to our own—and that certainly is no disparagement to those persons—than of folk whose life-work is on other lines than ours—than of men of affairs, for instance, of lawyers and physicians, sailors who talk generally, and soldiers who talk little, wine merchants, Bishops, great landlords—people of the world. Everybody, of course, should have his share of friends and chums among those of his own particular metal and make, who can answer him in his own key. But at the same time, he should not be absolutely unable to be happy in the society of a Chorus lady, to have a waiter for his friend—or a Duchess—or to spend, as I have spent, half of a Bank Holiday with a carpenter upon the pier at Brighton.

If, in your knowledge of a great city, a not infrequent change of living and neighbourhood is, as Bacon has it, "a great adamant of acquaintance," a great adamant of acquaintance with men is that you live for a while at least within easy hail of them. Hampstead, when we first lived there, did not pretend to be London at all. The omnibus conductor,

on his way to the capital, used to announce the fact. "Lunnon! Lunnon!" he would say. Of late years, Hampstead is London verily—but a second-rate London, I am told. In my early time, it was the chosen abode—never, of course, of any section of the great world: that will not be expected—but of many people who, to social refinement, added intellectual interest and ambition. Some of these were stimulating and some were restful. Several of these people—friends, or, at the slightest, very friendly acquaintances, of mine—have been mentioned incidentally, in one or two earlier chapters. Amongst them were pictorial artists of individuality enough to make them worth knowing.

George Du Maurier was one of them. It was in Hampstead, much more than in London, in his best and freshest years—it was at Hampstead evening parties that he found his type of the Adonis up to date. Church Row itself gave him more than one of the models in whom one recognizes his ideal of youthful feminine charm. The names of these ladies shall not be torn from me. The literary Canon, weird of countenance, lived in Hampstead: so, perhaps, did the great man of music—we had three or four Academicians: amongst them, Edwin Long, a man of dignity

and interest, whatever may have been the fate of his Art (and to the ingenuity of his better pieces justice has not lately been done). We had, too, the really eminent architects, Bodley and Norman Shaw: not to speak of younger ones — Basil Champneys, Garner, Reginald Blomfield, and others who have come into wide fame since that day. It was in the garden of the veteran water-colour painter, my old friend Carl Haag—still in a green old age, and retired in a castle on his "German Rhine"— that Du Maurier gave me, with interest and hopefulness, a long account of *Trilby*, when as yet *Trilby* was but in manuscript: shall I say in a state of unpreparedness and very notable undress.

James Sully—one of the most acceptable and readable of students of Psychology—lived at Hampstead. Furnivall, in the late 'Seventies and early 'Eighties, used to walk up from Primrose Hill and call upon us on a Sunday—bringing without fail his spirit of energy and cheerfulness; his air of perpetual, of constantly renewed youth. In his quick brown eye, you saw it, and in his ready step, and in his capacity to be instantly and vitally interested in every subject that arose in conversation: the things he knew, and the things to which he was eager to have entrance.

A residence at Hampstead, in that day, brought me into familiar contact, into sincere friendship, with leading members of a group of men who by production, as well as by organization, were doing a great deal for English Water-Colour. If the Schools of the "Royal Institute" had to be abandoned before they had been long established, and if the body exhibiting to-day in Piccadilly in the galleries designed by Mr. Robson has not exactly the interest for us that it had at one fortunate epoch in its history, that is no reason for ignoring what was actually the greatness of a prolonged hour, in its Past. My old friend Sir James Linton is almost the only survivor of those conspicuous in that time—though the time was but thirty years ago. In the early 'Eighties—first at the little Gallery in Pall Mall which passed subsequently into the hands of a chatty advocate of the Old Masters—Mr. Martin Colnaghi—and then at the fine place in Piccadilly—one saw, in each Exhibition of the Institute, contributions, eminently worthy, by Hine and Collier, Green, Linton, Gregory, Fulleylove.

The admirably simple nature of Charles Green was not incompatible with his possession of that keenness of observation without which such a master of character-drawing

could not have been. Linton requires no word —and, living, could, by my arrangements for this volume, scarcely receive it. The fidelity of Fulleylove's friendship, his quiet sagacity, his manly humour, are among the possessions of my mind—lost only in a measure to my present days. Not lost at all is my deep sense, my knowledge, of the worth of his Art—of its immense, unfailing dignity. Our School of Water-Colour has had no such draughtsman of Architecture, since the earlier days of Turner and the noble youth of Girtin. The masculine handling of his best period—the late 'Seventies, the earlier 'Eighties—places him above the reach of any comparison with Prout—save in the pencil-drawings in which both were so excellent. I remember something that he did — a morning vision of the Medici Gardens—was declared by F. G. Stephens to be worthy of Poussin. With that eulogium, I will leave Fulleylove.[1]

Gregory was an extraordinary executant in Painting, who did not, perhaps, in the produc-

[1] Fulleylove—like Sir George Douglas, Sir Coleridge Grove, and Edward Tait, the worthy son of a remarkable man in whom Savory and "Tom" Smith, at St. Bartholomew's, had recognized their intellectual equal—was, later, amongst those concerned in a conspiracy of kindness, which took the form of a dinner and a presentation to me at Prince's. I am bound to note this, briefly.

tions of his later maturity, quite do justice to the almost startling promise of his earlier years —as to which, however, it should be recollected that the "promise" was also a performance. To the loyalty of Gregory's character—the certainty of his friendship—tribute should also be paid. I hope I shall not be accused of introducing the irrelevant, or the quite unjustifiable, if I add that this good-natured, and thoughtful, capable, great burly *blond* had the most hopelessly disconcerting and amusing stutter that it was ever given to me to hear. Cyril Maude, at his very funniest—and that, upon the stage, has made me shake with laughter—could not stammer quite so effectively. I wonder whether Charles Lamb did. The spirit of compromise was not in Gregory: he made no terms with any word with which he was in difficulty. There was no getting *round* it; Gregory was *intransigeant;* the word had to be produced—that and no other—though you waited for three mortal minutes, respectfully, considerately, as if you did not notice his travail. It was a relief when the explosion came. I remember Fulleylove, who knew Gregory intimately, telling me, that, asked at lunch, on one occasion, what he was going to drink, there began in Gregory the evidences of a struggle,

and they waxed greater. Fulleylove knew quite well what Gregory wanted. It was ale. "Won't *Beer* do, Gregory?"—his friend in desperation suggested. Useless. They had to wait till "Ale" was duly pronounced—and the unconquered Gregory was again at ease.

For Hine and Thomas Collier a more serious comment; though I fear I cannot add any further feature to those I indicated in *On Books and Arts*, soon after the death of these delightful and so strongly contrasted painters. I knew the works of both before I knew the men; and, when I knew both men, I should have said, looking at them, that Hine ought by rights to have painted all the Colliers, and Collier all the Hines. Hine who, in his hale old age, had the appearance of a benevolent and thoughtful, withal a humorous, skipper, found his vocation when he was well past fifty; and it lay in the treatment, wholly subtle and suave, of the long lines of the chalk country in which his childhood had been cast. The Sussex Downs, with their golden uplands and, in their hollows, thin grey shadows, stretched out under the skies, pearly or opalescent, of changeless September weather. Collier never reached old age, or any age near to it. He died at about fifty—friendly and gentle—and in the years in which I knew him, and I

suppose always before, he had looked frail and spare, and had seemed hesitating, timid. But he knew what he wanted—exactly what he wanted in his Art. Nothing could be more decisive, or more potent. A vigour comparable only with that of David Cox—when Cox approaching old age, reached virility—was allied with a subtlety all his own: the subtlety of "relations," "values," faultlessly observed, and with touches slow but certain transferred to his paper. In his sketches, which—with one or two exceptions—are the best of his work, his economical and learned touches bring before you, like the prose of Hardy (in a famous piece in the *Return of the Native*), the passage of wind over an open land. I love his freshened seas. Collier had genius; and, more and more, it is getting to be recognized.

In the early 'Eighties, too, lived at Hampstead—and I saw a great deal of her—a woman, then in late middle age, who had been, in many matters, the confidential associate of leading painters and writers of a day that was twenty years earlier. This was Mrs. Gilchrist, Anne Gilchrist, a friend of Carlyle, a friend of D. G. Rossetti, and the close friend, while and before I best knew her, of the man of the most original mind America

(as I suppose) has ever produced. Of course I speak of Walt Whitman. Mrs. Gilchrist was the widow of the Art critic—art historian, and thinker, I must take leave to add (though as a sympathetic thinker Anne Gilchrist herself was, one cannot but believe, more distinguished)—who wrote the Life of Etty, and who, just before his early death, had produced the first and less excellent Edition of the Life of William Blake. That Life of William Blake, Mrs. Gilchrist herself subsequently put into ship-shape; edited in the form which lovers of the *Songs of Innocence* and of the weirder visions know and like: my reference, of course, is to the volumes issued by Fisher Unwin.

When I passed a few weeks in America in 1885—and lectured at Harvard and at that Johns Hopkins University which gives distinction to Baltimore—Mrs. Gilchrist furnished me with an introduction to Walt Whitman; but I, detained by hospitality at Boston, had to rush through Philadelphia on the way to Baltimore. I mean I could not stay a night there. I arrived in the forenoon; crossed the ferry to Camden—found in a small terrace of brick-built houses the abode of the Master: "W. Whitman" was the inscription on a small brass plate on door or gate. But Walt Whitman, his health just permitting it,

had gone into the country, to make his modest best of a late Autumn day. It was early November: the bright crispness of "the Fall." And all I saw of the great "Walt"—the great, brotherly poet—was the house, the caretaker, and the upstairs-room in which the old man mainly lived and worked—tables strewn with newspapers, and more especially, "cuttings" from newspapers, bearing possibly upon future labours, sure then to be but of a fragmentary kind. The cuttings were interesting enough, in their piled or scattered untidiness, as showing how concentrated Whitman's thought was upon what happened there and then: how in the America of his day alone did Whitman find inspiration.

I remember that when I got back to England and London, my first duty was the utterly unexpected one of going to Kensal Green Cemetery, to attend the funeral of Walt Whitman's friend. It was a dark November morning. Anne Gilchrist—kind, helpful, always interested in others, and in things of the mind, which with her were interfused, as they should be, with things of the spirit—lay in the closed coffin, in the chapel, while the sentence was read to us—a small and earnestly regretful group—"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

XIV

MY EDITORS

IN the chapter that begins here I discuss lightly, or lightly approach the discussion of, certain aspects at least of several distinguished men who in my time were Editors of one or other of the publications to which I was privileged — generally speaking — to rather largely contribute.

When I was astonishingly young and of necessity incompetent, I wrote one or two articles for the *Contemporary Review*, and perhaps a dozen or sixteen, or more than that, for the *Spectator*. I knew very little of the Editor of the *Contemporary*, Henry Alford—at that time Dean of Canterbury—and Alford —kind and worthy—must have known very little about Modern Art, or he would have found wanting in artistic knowledge—and possibly artistic feeling—my papers on Hippolyte Flandrin and his master, Ingres. The Dean's justification for accepting them—if he had any—was that they did bring before a section of the public some knowledge of the

existence and the character of perhaps the last great religious painter that Europe has seen, and of the modern Classical artist whose work he revered and by whose teaching he profited.

Here I have had to say a little about myself, because there was scarcely anything I had to say of Dean Alford. My opportunities of knowing Richard Hutton and Meredith Townsend—joint Editors of the *Spectator*—were greater. Hutton I knew chiefly by paying a series of pleasant calls on him, at the office in Wellington Street, where, with a single eyeglass—never with him an instrument of offence, as it could become so easily in the eye, searching and condemnatory, of Mr. Whistler—he sat over a pile of books and papers, and, though at first with the air (through shyness, in his case), a little threatening, of a watch-dog shaggy and sagacious, was ever ready to say something thoughtful and suggestive. Of all I heard from him, I am afraid that at this distance of time I can recall definitely only two things. One is that he—a very infrequent playgoer, and certain, when he went to the Theatre, to judge things by a standard uncustomary, unconventional, and very worthy—agreed, most cordially, with the high estimate I had formed of Miss Kate Terry, an estimate I had expressed, not for

the first time, in an article in the *Spectator* bewailing her too early retirement. Kate Terry's absolute unstaginess, her quick intelligence, her delicate method, as well as her somewhat undefinable charm—of which these were but a part—Richard Hutton, it was evident, set great store by.

The second thing is that Hutton one day—à propos of what, I forget—calmly expressed the opinion that we were "all more or less humbugs." I said nothing—or if I said anything, perhaps mildly assented, with the kind of non-committing assent that you in pure politeness accord to an opinion you do not propose to discuss. But by the time that I was in the street, I am certain that I rebelled. Of Hutton's self his saying was utterly untrue. There was nothing whatever of the humbug about that austere follower of the Wordsworth of the *Ode to Duty*—that ever-anxious inquirer for the truth, and for the truth especially in the matter of Ethics. I do not think that Hutton was ever insincere for a moment—and to be "something of a humbug" one must be insincere with reasonable frequency.

Of Hutton I saw little after those early *Spectator* days. During his later years, while I was still often interested in his own subtle essays—literary and theological—I rather

wearied of the imitation Huttons who had, doubtless, his good principles, but scarcely his vision; and I became impatient—and impatient increasingly—that in a journal so reputable, and in some ways so authoritative—in a journal held in almost romantic respect, it is believed, in many a Scottish manse, and in some English parsonages, and the expression of whose political opinions commanded the attention of the well-informed—a work of literary or of pictorial art should hardly ever be approached from the point of view from which it might reasonably demand to be judged. A work of Literature, especially, was apt, it seemed to me, to be appraised much more with reference to what was deemed the correctness or faultiness of its ethics than with reference to the faultiness or the completeness of its art. The *Spectator*—it seemed to me—was, in grave artistic matters, in matters which may outlast the utterance of contemporary, or at all events of immediate and superficial opinion, scarcely a desirable or reasonably constituted Court of Appeal.

Hutton's colleague, Meredith Townsend, chief author of the political and social articles during a whole generation—of whom I saw a good deal at his own house, and at his mother's house at Hampstead, and once or twice at my

own—was, I may be permitted to remind the younger generation of readers, one of the first political writers, and one of the most engaging social inquirers, of his time. He started, like his partner, with the possession of the inevitable basis of all sound criticism of matters great or small, political, social, or artistic—honesty and courage. Those virtues both men retained. Would only that in artistic matters they had added to them those other virtues of comprehension and taste!

Townsend—dead but lately, at about eighty years old—was brilliant, pungent, positive. In defence of his extreme positiveness it may be said, that, at all events much oftener than most very positive people, he was actually right. Right even in his gift of prophecy. Seldom can there have been any one more thoroughly absorbed in his profession—more thoroughly hemmed in by it—than he was. There were hours when, in his study in Harley Street—conscious of his influence and the weightiness of his view and the exactness of his deliverance—he may have thought, not so much that Meredith Townsend came into the world to write on great issues, as that great issues came to be pending in order that Meredith Townsend might write about them. Of the dignity of his profession, honourably

exercised, Townsend was fully conscious. He and his friend, the genial E. D. J. Wilson, of the *Times*, survived to a day when, in the eager search for the sensational, the methods of journalism had, as he held, deteriorated. And it must be granted that he was right.

In Townsend's great day, and Hutton's—possibly before the advent of Mr. St. Loe Strachey in Wellington Street—Mr. Asquith, already making some mark at the Bar, wrote a good deal (if I remember rightly what I was told at the time) in the journal Townsend partly edited and partly owned. I recollect the gravity with which Meredith Townsend held forth on Mr. Asquith, when the spirit of prophecy was upon him. Very earnestly did he declare, "If Asquith's brain lasts"—I am not aware that there was ever any doubt about that—"if Asquith's brain *lasts*, his place will be a great one."

I have named—hardly more than named—Meredith Townsend's mother. But she was interesting, and few words may indicate roughly something of her character, and her relations with the son she was proud of.

From the time of her capable old age to that of her old age nearly spent, every Saturday afternoon he arrived to be with her. The *Spectator* had been on her breakfast-table

early in the morning. To its studious perusal the hours of the day—until "Meredith's" hansom drew up in Church Row—were regularly consecrated. By the time of his coming, the venerable woman, white-haired, but fairly erect, could have passed a creditable examination in the contents of her son's paper—an examination that could hardly have been deemed otherwise than satisfactory, even in a house where standards, set by the great Meredith, were amusingly exacting, or amusingly high. I have been told of the deep disappointment that clouded the countenance of the political journalist on an occasion when—it having become necessary to verify a fact or a statement made in chance conversation—a grandchild in the house was found unable to produce, at a moment's notice, a particular article in a particular volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, which was demanded to settle the question out of hand. It was a regrettable deficiency: a lamentable lapse—but childhood must be childhood still. In the evening—after dinner—I incline to think that conversation was less strenuous and responsible. The publicist would give himself his sole recreation: he would take a hand at whist, with his Mother, and his sisters; or, that one of these might be relieved,

my wife would be summoned from our neighbouring house, and, in the intervals between the tricks, Townsend would administer to her sage counsels destined for herself in the first place, in the second for me, and in the third for the world at large—since the habit of holding forth was strong.

The Editor of the *Academy*, in its first and the most learned of its days, when Mr. Murray was its publisher, was Charles Edward Appleton. I made my *début* in that journal with a sober little article on Ingres, written as we were taking possession of our first house. I wrote it on the kitchen table, while the workmen were bringing in the furniture from the van. That Appleton himself—fresh from the common room at Oxford, where he had been a Fellow of St. John's—lived at Hampstead, I did not know at the time; but we were often afterwards at Netley Cottage, the interior of which Mr. Basil Champneys charmingly arranged for him with blue and white china against a primrose background; and I remember meeting there many interesting people—Pater among the younger, Gosse among the youngest of them, and, among the older, James Hinton, author of *The Mystery of Pain* (he was a subtle thinker, appreciated by the few), and again among the elder men,

one of the most solidly gifted of the Præ-Raphaelite painters, Ford Madox Brown. I recall Brown's genial and manly presence—his ways picturesque and winning, and the pleasantness too, of his daughter, Lucy, who, a very little later, became Mrs. William Rossetti, and of his son Oliver, who died young.

At Appleton's, I saw one evening, a nephew of Napoleon. This was Prince Lucien, the philologist; long resident in London. Like his cousin, the undesirable "Plon-Plon," and unlike his other cousin, the great poetic dreamer, the lovable if faulty thinker, who reigned in France till the catastrophe of Sedan—and to whom, only now, intellectual England (influenced at last by Olivier) may be beginning to do justice—Prince Lucien bore a striking—dare I say, in its real, and not in its slang sense, an almost awful resemblance, to the Man of Austerlitz and of the Code and of the Hundred Days. Prince Lucien though, in bearing and in conversation, had something of the graciousness of English Royalty. I could not talk to him about Philology. He saw my feebleness, and talked to me about the Theatre: recognizing, I think with sincerity, its interest, and what one may consider its importance.

It was said by a University wit, that Appleton had been born "to show that"—who was it? but the name does not matter—"to show that" a certain already well-known person "was *not* a prig." The burden that by implication thus rested on the shoulders of the Editor of the *Academy* was supposed to be a particularly heavy one. He *was* Academic, undoubtedly—and so able to sustain it—but, withal, an amiable, worthy, quite unaffected man—a little wanting, it may be, in a sense of humour; and the absence of a sense of humour is certainly an excellent foundation on which the edifice of a prig may be raised.

I liked Dr. Appleton—had little complaint to make of him as an Editor, and wrote for him for three years or thereabouts, and sometimes afterwards for his successors, my friends C. E. Doble and H. J. Cotton (the latter, a high authority on India), notices of the Theatre and of Fine Art. And I believe Appleton had no grievance against *me*, but that, when I called upon him, I chose an hour at which he was yet in his bath.

With the *Academy*, much of which was too learned for the Public—for in comparison with the articles on Philology, even Dr. Ebenezer Prout was lightness itself, he was gossamer, relatively, on Music—with the

Academy, then, Appleton had uphill work. But notwithstanding the existence of the *Athenæum*, the journal was supposed, in both Universities, to supply a "felt want," and so, the "sinews of war" failing here, the Editor toured America—or those parts of America in which Learning had most friends—to beat up help. He dined out laboriously, at influential houses, night after night, in Boston and New York—I fear to little purpose. Appleton's health became affected. He was "ordered" as the ridiculous phrase is—that is, he was *advised*, by the doctors he elected to employ—to go to Egypt. He left many friends to regret his early death.

My next Editor was W. H. Mudford, of the *Standard;* but as he still lives—to linger happily over trout streams, and, I hope, to hear good Music—I am forbidden by the rule I have thought it best to lay down for myself, to do more than briefly mention him. I may, however, repeat, what is of common knowledge, that Mudford was one of the most esteemed and successful Editors of his time. He did not attempt to cover one half or quarter of the ground which it is the ideal of the very modern and more or less Americanized journalist to occupy. He was not an admirer of endlessness and indifferent to quality,

for Mudford wanted little from you: but he wanted it as good as it could be. I may add the not very significant detail that he was one of the last Editors to keep up the tradition of inaccessibility. He went out little—was charming when you met him; but on the whole was as closely confined as James Knowles, whom next I speak of, was largely *répandu*.

That certain commentators in the daily Press, whose knowledge was superficial and whose point of view was remote, should have expressed of James Knowles, on the morrow of his death, an impression of him strangely unlike that made on those of us who were accustomed to be in his society, and who from time to time were in his confidence, was perhaps not a matter to provoke surprise; though, to myself, it did occasion disappointment.[1] The conception that such commentators—it may be that there were but one or two of them—put forth, tended to belittle our friend, inasmuch as, in the view presented, we were invited to attribute his place in the world, and the success that attended his career, less

[1] The first four paragraphs relating to Sir James Knowles are reprinted, by permission, from my share in the "tribute" to his memory which appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* the month after his death.

to high individuality, comprehensiveness of mind, and strength of character, than to a quick scent for the thing that was acceptable and popular — with that more thoughtful section of the public, of course, which alone, presumably, his Review was intended to address. To have a keen, quick scent; to know what the better public was asking for, or wishing for, and to provide it in abundance, as a capable man of business—that, it appeared, was his essential characteristic. That it was—was it?—that caused James Knowles not only to be motioned during thirty years, in every social thing, to what Robert Browning described graphically as "the velvet of the sward," but to be, in a sense, the intimate of illustrious and exalted personages; very much the intimate of statesmen, poets, and withdrawn philosophers. One would have thought that a little reflection would have persuaded such a commentator as I have pointed at that the possession of gifts useful, creditable, but withal a little vulgar—having nothing of rare or fine —could not have enabled any man to compass those better ends which confessedly James Knowles, during a long and influential life, attained.

The comprehensiveness of Knowles's mind and its sustained freshness, his prolonged

youthful enthusiasm—that and his kindliness of purpose—were what most impressed me. Even one like myself, condemned by other studies and interests (while yet they are the interests and studies of my choice) to hopeless ignorance of Politics, Philosophy, Physical Science—who knows, indeed, what else?—may have an inkling, when these things, any of these things, are raised in his presence, as to whether the speakers on them have, in Goethe's phrase, their "eye on the object." An "eye on the object"—an eye turned on the object with singular sagacity—struck me always as the fortunate and carefully cherished possession of James Knowles.

If Art—Art in the widest sense—Painting, Engraving, Literature, the Theatre—was spoken of, an ignorance which I am fain to believe more measurable allowed me to appraise approximately, roughly, the value of the communication Knowles upon any occasion happened to make. It was not as a devotee of the Playhouse, not as a devotee of Painting, not as a devotee of Literature that one could have regarded him. That is to say, he never narrowly "specialized"—he never lost balance. But he was interested genuinely. One wondered, perhaps, at his keen interest in each and in all. And why he never lost

balance—never lost that sense of proportion which the longer one lives one feels the more convincingly to be the property of all important minds — was, that in thinking of pictures and of prints, of acted plays, and of imaginative or critical writing, it was really Art; it was always Art that he was thinking of. No hard and fast line divided, or could divide, for him, the Stage from Painting, Painting from Literature; and so it was that an admirable common-sense guided his spoken criticism of the Drama — and his remarks made havoc with popular names, and preserved always a reverence for genius: for such a genius as Irving's. And so it was, too, that in a criticism of Literature it was the root of the matter that he went to—he could put conventionalities and the expected aside, and see things as they were, and welcome the newer treatment, and be just to the success of the old. And so it was that in Painting he could do what painters seldom do—the craftsmen foolish people appeal to, who rarely admit the possibility of any right groove but the particular rut in which they happen to practise — he could admire work the most diverse; and I have myself accompanied him, within the limits of an afternoon, to an enthusiastic inspection of the drawings of

Poynter (if he had a preference, it was towards Classicism that instinct and judgment drew him), and a hardly less enthusiastic or sympathetic inspection of the prints and pastels of Whistler.

I do not wish to insist, to elaborate, to labour the point; but what I am convinced of is that no small part of the success of James Knowles, in his high calling of public guide and monitor—that no small part of his much talked of, quick, and managerial appreciation of the pulse of the public, and of his much less talked of width and readiness of sympathy with individual men and women with whom he was in contact—had its origin, and found ever its best support, in the gifts of his own nature; no merely business faculty, unusually sharpened, but an intellect alert and keen, a temperament receptive, tolerant, fearless, sincere.

I have seen at Queen Anne's Lodge, St. James's Park, a pretty, tasteful water-colour, by Queen Alexandra. She had given it to Knowles during his first "week-end" visit to Sandringham. It was at a later visit there that there occurred a little incident that he related to me soon afterwards. On the Saturday evening, he had admired the design of the Cross of the Victorian Order. On the Sunday morning,

as the guests were assembling in the hall, ere starting to attend Church Service, King Edward appeared upon the scene; a sword became visible, and Knowles received the accolade, followed at once, if I remember, by the "gaud"—I use the word in no disparaging sense—by the "gaud" he had approved of. And "This should have been done before," said King Edward, very nicely: remembering—apparently a little more effectually than his "responsible advisers": the Government of the day, whatever it may have been—the length and range of James Knowles's services.

Another little story of Royalty I remember Knowles told me; but I doubt if he got it from Sandringham. It was a story of the great Queen, and of old Lady Southampton —who by reason of age, long-proved devotedness, and reciprocated friendship, was privileged to talk of many things. In some such terms as the following, Lady Southampton felt herself inspired to address the Queen one day. "Do not you think, Ma'am, one of the satisfactions of the Future State will be not only our reunion with those whom we have loved on Earth, but our opportunities of seeing face to face so many of the noble figures of the Past —of other lands and times? Bible times, for

instance. Abraham will be there, Ma'am. Isaac too, and Jacob. Think of what they will be like! And the sweet singer of Israel. He, too. Yes, Ma'am. King David we shall see." And, after a moment's silence, with perfect dignity and decision the great Queen made answer: "I will *not* meet David."

XV

LORD LEIGHTON—MILLAIS—ORCHARDSON

IS it ever given to any one but his dearest friend, to know well—really well, I mean —the head of a Government, or an Archbishop, or the President of the Royal Academy? In different degrees, all these posts, and others more or less like them, are so absorbing, with the burden of acquaintances absolutely innumerable and duties absolutely multifarious, that each man's view of the holder of such posts must be partial and limited—limited too often to one particular facet of the human object of his study.

I make the remark à propos of my own most slight acquaintance with Lord Leighton —and because I have felt, always, that it is useless to attempt to know thoroughly the people singled out for great place and unrelieved responsibility. What is it to have seen at a dinner-table a handsome man, quite conscious of his own elaborate comeliness and Italianized grace; to have had a hand-shake and a word or two with him from time to time; to have had notes, not merely formal,

I admit—expressing, undoubtedly, his real thought on the matters they dealt with? It is not much. It is interesting—sometimes even enlightening, up to a certain point—to have been not quite out of touch with such a man and with the likes of him; but, the thought comes, If the moments and occasions of your contact with him were removed altogether from his life, to his life what difference would that make?

I met Leighton first, I remember, as I met Sir John Millais—and it was on the same evening—at dinner at Marion Spielmann's: an artistic feast (the *entremet* was "Royal Academy Pudding") given by Mr. Spielmann, in honour of the visit to England of Emile Wauters, a distinguished Belgian painter, and an interesting man. Leighton was, as I have seen him afterwards—or as I have never failed to see him when I saw him at all—ready, cheerful, courtly, and fluent: *en évidence:* spending himself without stint, but also without effort. Agreeable as a guest, as a host he had quickness and tact. To see him receive the crowd at an Academy Soirée —I had not, in Leighton's time, the privilege of attending that more select function, an Academy Banquet—was a study in gradations of manner.

A courtier honest and trustworthy, Leighton was admittedly ambitious. In the presence of Royalty, he was at his ease of course. He would have been, even if Royalty—the Royalty we in England know—had not generally itself the faculty of *putting* at his ease every one. But, in the presence of Royalty—or so I thought, on the occasion on which I saw him so circumstanced, at one great Ball—it was with Royalty, nothing else but Royalty, that Leighton elected to be concerned. A failing perhaps, but a small one. *Noblesse oblige*, and the superiority of Leighton to the average man constituted him *Noblesse* before actual rank came to him—and he accepted his responsibilities—Royalty being absent—and was nice to every student he spoke to, and to his models was chivalrous and charming.

Lord Leighton did too many things with skill and with facility to do very much with perfection. But self-control, and the studied arrangement of his time—in which is included a faultless punctuality, a soldier's punctuality, in every engagement (he was punctual because he was busy)—permitted him to get from himself, if not the highest results of his labours professional and social, at all events the most necessary and the most numerous.

And, if a hundred engagements, official and in the world, did at times—as one felt—lower a little, by mere diversion of interest, the quality of his artistic performance, he at least never bent to the public for which it was his business to work. That is to say, his Art, though it suffered disadvantages, suffered never the disadvantage of conscious compromise. What he willed it to be—what he felt it was his duty to make it—that, as far as possible, it became. There were times when he had willed it to be agreeably decorative; times, rare times, when his aim was Drama; frequent times when what he sought was the luxurious—and in all these endeavours—in the endeavours to these ends—Leighton had the public support.

But in a good deal of his later work an aim ever present was the aim at an intricate and balanced and often stately design. In that, the public could not follow him; and he knew it—he looked it in the face. I remember once having a note from him, speaking of an important effort in this particular direction—an effort in which he believed that he had compassed his particular ends. He expected no applause for it: he was receiving, or quite ready to receive, with a calm dignity, a reception cold and inadequate, from a world of alien tastes.

Before I pass on to another, let me note that in this matter of the dominance of Design, or at the least its very visible presence, Leighton was the precursor of a group of artists whom some of us have been busy in enjoying and commending, to-day. They work in various mediums: not much thus far in the medium that was Leighton's chiefly; but they work in his spirit—often with the preoccupation that was the preoccupation of his later life. I think of men like Brangwyn, Livens, Walter Bayes, Cayley-Robinson. Design is a quality they strive for. More than that, a quality they attain. In the labour of one of them, it may be florid and fluent; in that of another it may be abrupt and arresting; in that of a third, obviously learned; of a fourth, graciously tender or austerely reticent. But it is Design always. And, for Lord Leighton, it is one of "Time's revenges" that the uprising of this Art—and some appreciation of this Art—should have occurred.

Let us get to Sir John Millais—though, having got to him, there is little I want to say. That is not through lack of admiring Millais, and liking him, but because his qualities, as man and artist—and more especially as man—seem to me to have lain open to

popular appreciation, on lines sufficiently simple. If there is any nature that the average healthy Englishman can understand readily, it is the nature of Millais. What was he but an average healthy Englishman, himself—an average healthy Englishman with extraordinary potency in expressing himself in paint? An artist courageous and gifted; with firm grip of the present fact; a man with the instincts of a great gentleman—the frankness, geniality, directness, loyalty—and, withal, a bit of a Philistine: the price he paid for being British so typically. More than that I shall not try to say. Very likely I have not been able to make any contribution whatever of my own towards the further understanding of him. I suppose that I agree with the common verdict. I feel at any rate that my own absolutely casual experience of this most likeable and generous-minded man, suggested nothing to induce me to dissent from it.

Has it not sometimes occurred to the reader, in thinking over the characters of those he more or less knows, how amusing, how illuminating, it would be to be allowed, and to be able, to watch and listen to an otherwise *tête-à-tête* interview between some couple of men strongly contrasted—con-

trasted to the point of incompatibility, whatever overtures and efforts at politeness and goodwill might pass between them on the surface? An enforced *tête-à-tête* between Henry Irving and Whistler—that is what I should very much like to have listened to. My interest in the result would hardly have been less had it been possible to see, in closest quarters with each other, Millais, of whom I have just been speaking, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

In my youth, when a wave of Æstheticism —of the type rather roughly though very funnily satirized by Sir W. S. Gilbert in *Patience*—passed over much of English Literature, I wrote of some manifestations of Burne-Jones's art with a warmth of praise I could not now rise to. Much of it I still admire. Design occupied Burne-Jones on the whole hardly less—perhaps not at all less—than it occupied Leighton. But it was not Design that gave Burne-Jones popularity. There was grace of life in abundance; there was *naïveté* of expression; there was prettiness of detail. And that last characteristic—scarcely a great quality, indeed, though a permissible endowment—is of extreme seductiveness to the superficial and the ill-informed. With Burne-Jones pictorial invention overflowed. His

brush was garrulous: pleasantly garrulous, like his talk—in both there was just an approach to a delusive and undue and even monotonous smoothness. Everything was lubricated. You wanted to grip the road a little. You wanted sometimes to feel the brake.

It would be unfair to judge any painter or draughtsman—even a figure-painter like Burne-Jones—by the lasting or fleeting attractiveness to oneself of his type of heroine. Yet that does count for something; and it is borne in upon one by experience that the type of "Ned" Jones—to give him the name chosen for him by certain of his pals—has, with its obvious attractiveness, such disabilities as may attend the anæmic and yearning. He had no deep care for Landscape. I think his attitude towards it was completely expressed in a sentence he said to me at Stopford Brooke's:—"I like a Landscape well enough, as long as it is over a man's shoulder, or under a man's arm." He had a right to that attitude. Decorative background. And that background he built up, of various constituents: the art of the earlier Italian Renaissance—the art of Dürer, with his towers and walled cities and abrupt hill-sides—and perhaps an art unrealized, that Burne-Jones dreamt of, when sleep had hardly come, and contact

with the firm day and its reality of defined form had hardly vanished.

With the Art of Orchardson, distinguished, almost aristocratic, and with his personality, so common-sense and manly, while so refined, I was—I must suppose—in readier and more cordial sympathy than with that of Burne-Jones, generally. The sources of Orchardson's art go back no further than to the elegant Eighteenth Century in France. Orchardson appreciated not only the well-proportioned architecture and the furniture and accessories of the days of Louis Quinze and Louis Seize; but, even more, the *poses* and manners, the grace that was Nature in that age. In feeling and in submitting to the influence of France, Orchardson was, after all, but playing the refined Scotsman's nearly inevitable *rôle*. The influence did not deter, it only happily encouraged, his own development. About him, with his Scottish, and I suppose Edinboro' accent, there was somehow, though less than was the case with his contemporaries and fellow Academicians, Edwin Long and Calderon, a touch of Spanish grace. He was a reader: he was an assiduous listener. It was Lady Orchardson's not disagreeable task to read to him, as he slowly made progress with his canvas, page after page of Eighteenth-

Century Memoirs. He spent his hours under the ægis of the *Ancien Régime*.

For recreations, I have met Orchardson at the theatre; and he might in later years have been met where I should not, for my own part, have had the patience to stay for him—fishing in his stream of the Darenth, during his "week-ends," when Portland Place was deserted for his country abode, near Dartford. Years ago, he was one of the devotees of the real Tennis, in comparison with which Lawn Tennis is as a snack by the wayside to a square meal.

I remember Orchardson's giving me, at dinner once, at my own table—and it is a little example of his hold upon reality, so characteristically firm—a word of explanation of "the light in the eye"—talked of by many, in sentimental fashion, as if it were an inner light—a light visible under happy emotion, and especially in the anticipation of it. Such a light there is, said Orchardson, but it is, of course, no "inner light" at all, and—save indirectly—no manifestation of the spirit. Instinctively, mechanically, under circumstances of joyful surprise, the upper eyelid is lifted and recedes, and the eye itself exposed, of necessity, to a fuller illumination than it habitually receives.

In regard to his own work, the world knows Orchardson by Portraiture and Genre. Long ago, he told me it was his ambition to paint, ere he departed, one great landscape. He had it in his mind. He was hankering after it. That ambition was never realized; for he did not imagine that in one or two small canvases, of landscape alone, he had done anything for which long life or particular fame was reserved. The nearest approach to its fulfilment was made perhaps, some time after he first spoke to me about it. It was made in "The Borgia"—a picture of a feast at evening: a sinister intention in one observant figure, and, in the dark, tall screen of Classic foliage, a background tragic, ominous and weird.

XVI

MANY ACTORS

IT was when I was a boy indeed, and spending a few days in London with a cousin who was my guide, to see the great Exhibition of 1862, that I was first inside a Theatre. The house was the Haymarket; the piece, *Our American Cousin;* the attraction, Sothern as Lord Dundreary. We went at "half-play"; and I remember seeming very unexpectedly high up. It may have been the upper boxes, it may have been the gallery, that we sat in. What I know is, that we saw, and watched intently, the second half of a performance finished and entertaining. Certainly the Dundreary of Sothern was a well-wrought character, of eccentric *Genre.*

My second visit to London and the Theatre was paid a few months later—when the Town was enveloped in the fogs of Autumn. I was with my Father and an Aunt, in lodgings in Kensington; and a "growler" of those days took us, by devious ways,

after an early dinner, to Sadler's Wells—it was during the last weeks of Phelps's management. Phelps played Hamlet, and, was already, as it seemed to me, too old, too stiff, and too artificial. Still, it was a serious occasion; and I beheld of course with interest and respect a worthy who had fought for a Drama with brains—a steady-going enthusiast, of slow, invisible fire, who, I was told, had taught Shakespeare to the North of London.

After that period, Phelps's performances were more or less intermittent; and it must have been something like ten years later, that under the management of John Hollingshead, I saw him at the Gaiety—in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He was Falstaff, of course; but a Falstaff wanting in geniality and *bonhomie;* a Falstaff dry: infinitely too deliberate, it seemed. Thus, my small personal experience of this valiant, self-reliant, eminently conscientious and in the main judicious actor, was not exactly happy. It was silly, perhaps, to miss an opportunity which might have been mine also, in Phelps's latest days, of seeing him as Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, in *The Man of the World*—an old and formal comic drama in which, I have heard always, his comedy did not

lack effectiveness. But it was in distinctly earlier Victorian days that Phelps — as it appears—deserved to be spoken of in terms not so carefully measured: in phrases that denote something more than a *succès d'estime*. He was then Macready's first lieutenant. As such, in Macready's absence, he played with force and fire—Mr. Browning has told me—in one or more of the dramas of the poet then young; and I know it was Robert Browning's impression that at least once Phelps was the innocent cause of arousing Macready's jealousy, to the detriment of the run of the piece.

The mention of the more famous of these two tragedians reminds me that as a schoolboy I heard Macready give, at Weston-super-Mare, a Reading of Prose and Verse, for a Charity. Old age was well upon him, but it appeared to have done little to undermine his strength. Unfatigued, apparently, and with voice full and resonant, he, who had done justice, as I doubt not, in the earlier part of the performance, to the prose of Sterne, did more than justice to the effective rhetoric of Campbell's *Lord Ullin's Daughter*. And, if my memory of a thing so long ago still serves me with accuracy, Macready did not fall into the temptation

that an actor, speaking generally—the average actor that is—would not recognize as a temptation at all—he would walk into it blindfold and unquestioning—the pitfall of treating a Reading as if it were a Stage performance, and so, in transitions abrupt and mechanical, giving force, it may be—obvious force—to an impersonation, at the cost of sacrificing the unity and literary quality of the whole.

In the very last days of Buckstone's Haymarket management, I had my glimpse of the elder Compton—Edward Compton's father—and of Chippendale. Compton was accepted as the ideal Touchstone: a part in which quaint dryness is a virtue. To Chippendale—a man of presence, of a certain impressiveness, and a judicious actor—there fell some of the more substantial and outstanding *rôles* in old-world comedy, and more particularly in Eighteenth Century comedy, in which, more than in any other *genre*, "presence" is a qualification not to be denied. When Chippendale was on the stage, the stage was furnished.

A little later—but it is already long ago—when they were at the Prince of Wales's, I saw the Bancrofts in several of their principal productions and revivals. I saw also, at that time, John Hare: never until

the days of *A Pair of Spectacles* better fitted than in Gerridge, the gasfitter, in *Caste*. As the "heavy swell" of the 'Seventies in one at least of T. W. Robertson's comedies, Bancroft was to the manner born. One was amused by him—the performance was so slight and yet so telling an exaggeration of what one could see in the life, by walking down St. James's Street, or keeping one's eyes open in the social world. But I doubt if I ever saw Sir Squire to really better advantage than as Triplet, in his revival of *Masks and Faces*. The *amour propre* and happy self-deception of the poor gentleman, his essential good nature—since sufferance is the badge of all his tribe—was excellently indicated. Nothing could be more popular than the Polly Eccles of Lady Bancroft; but if in that part her gaiety of temperament was most clearly manifested, it was in a piece of Gilbert's in which the character she played was first young and then picturesquely and even touchingly old, that she showed most completely the ripeness of her feeling and the discretion of her art.

In the late days of the Prince of Wales's Theatre in Tottenham Street, with the Bancrofts there was associated Ellen Terry, charming and pathetic in *Masks and Faces*, as the

deserted wife of Vane. I cannot quarrel with Miss Terry, however, for preferring, even to this part, her part of Olivia, in *The Vicar of Wakefield*—seen at the Lyceum. There, with an admirable impulse, she was filial and sisterly: her rightful place upon the stage uncontested, even when beside her was Irving as the Vicar —Irving grandly simple and grandly benign.

Ellen Terry's Lady Macbeth gave occasion for Mr. Sargent's picture. That of itself perhaps justifies it. Her performance of Camma, in *The Cup*, was invested with a certain authority and splendour; and the Doge's was not the only Court in which there was felt the large persuasiveness of her Portia. Her Beatrice, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, was bewitching and brilliant of aspect: of bearing more *flamboyante* than that of her sister, Kate, who played it quite delightfully, during a few weeks only, in the last of the 'Sixties— I will not accept the responsibility of awarding the palm; but it is fitting that the earlier impersonation should be remembered.

There is no better moment than the present one for speaking—albeit it may be inadequately—of one other member of the Terry family; Miss Marion Terry, whose health, I believe, much more than anything else, stood in the way of her due recognition by the

Public in her early days—though it was certainly then also that she was least sympathetic. It is only as a woman past her first youth that Marion Terry's art has been conspicuous—as in *Quality Street*, and *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and *Captain Drew on Leave*. And I am minded to add that the word "conspicuous," which I chance to have employed, is not at any time a happy one in dealing with an art like hers; remarkable, not for attractions felt at the first moment by the first comer, but rather for *nuances* and *finesse*, a modern delicacy of light and shadow.

The inconspicuous ease of Marion Terry's Stage bearing and delivery, in all these later years of a career now far advanced, and therefore discussable, has had (though my comparison will not, I suppose, be generally relished, and may even be considered a little surprising) some affinity with that of the veteran Stage counsellor in times of trouble and occasions of difficulty—Charles Wyndham—who, since the brilliant indiscretions of his theatrical youth (*Pink Dominoes*, for instance), and the not undemonstrative chivalry of his David Garrick—it may be a little "rubbed in"—has taught us an art long supposed to be beyond the scope of English players—the art of reconciling the audience to a great mono-

logue, sustained in drawing-room tone. The actors of the Gymnase, the Vaudeville, and the Français were alone, it was conjectured, equal to coping with the effective delivery of lengthy drawing-room arguments and man-of-the-world philosophy, such as fell from the pen of the greater and younger Dumas. But Sir Charles Wyndham, through a manner not in the least incisive, but faultlessly insinuating, has manifested his right of entry into the ground that was theirs.

A method far more obvious, yet not prevented by that circumstance from being in its own way sterling, was one of which a pleasant acquaintance with Wilson Barrett and Miss Eastlake made me a rather frequent witness. It is true I never saw Wilson Barrett till he got to the Princess's; but there, in realistic melodrama, such as *The Silver King* and *Lights o' London*, and in pieces of more marked ambition, like *Claudian* and *The Manxman*—not to speak of *Hamlet*—I listened to an utterance and diction telling and distinct, and saw what importance could be assumed, what authority exercised, upon the stage, by a short, thick-set, perfectly intelligent, yet not highly imaginative man who knew his business and was strenuously bent on the pursuit of it.

Miss Mary Eastlake I had seen at the

Criterion—a simply sweet and well-mannered blameless heroine of a piece that I fell very foul of—*Pink Dominoes*. I had also seen her in the Engadine. At the Princess's, the erstwhile bewitching young person had given place to an actress capable, interesting; and, although not without mannerisms, Miss Eastlake was still attractive. In her art, she made progress. It had, in *Clito*, what is called "realism"—presumably, the uglier side of reality. On the whole, I preferred her in parts not only more sympathetic to any audience, but in more real accord with what I believe to have been her nature and temperament.

One day, when she lunched with us—both she and Wilson Barrett and his family were almost neighbours of ours—I remember that though by no means habitually priding myself upon my *rôle* being imitative, I was imitative, servilely. I reproduced upon the luncheon-table, with humiliating accuracy, an arrangement of flowers—golden yellow, yellow, pale yellow, white and yellow, and pure white—which I had beheld, only the day before, on a table set out by Mr. Whistler. Miss Eastlake was complimentary; and, when I had named the source of my inspiration, I was at ease, and could listen to the actress extolling the merits of the placid farm-yard country

that she loved. At her house, I have found myself in the pleasant company of Hall Caine, and of the blithe Miss Marie Corelli: with whom indeed and many others I was once upon a house-boat, boarded for half an hour by le Général Boulanger, in his quality of Pretender. Upon these social rounds, Boulanger was discreet. At Wilson Barrett's, one of my remembrances is of the manly figure of Bret Harte.

Not far removed from that period of Theatrical History in which Wilson Barrett and Miss Eastlake received the most of popular approval—roughly, a quarter of a century ago—was the time at which several very interesting and then, generally speaking, quite young actresses, devoted heart and soul to the intellectual Drama, did excellent and striking work; and most of them I was privileged to know. Two of them were of American birth—Miss Marion Lea, who first played the heroine of my humble adaptation from André Theuriet, at the Vaudeville (it was called *The Farm by the Sea*, and was later taken into the country by Miss Muriel Wylford, whom, to my delight, I rehearsed in it, at Liverpool), and Miss Elizabeth Robins, like Miss Lea, as everybody knows, a confirmed Ibsenite. My own admiration of Ibsen

is wont to be limited to the pieces of poetic outlook and of happily unexplained mystery, like *The Master Builder* and *The Lady by the Sea*. The charm of Miss Robins as an actress was one that I did not feel strongly: her force and mental agility as a woman, I have never doubted since first I met her in Stanhope Place, at the house of the father of my friend, William Poel. Miss Lea—married while still young to a son of Dr. Weir Mitchell—was interestingly imaginative, and could express a genuine emotion, though with no very finished art. There was a great deal in her.

Contemporaries of these ladies were Miss Eleanor Calhoun, Miss Janet Achurch, and Miss Alma Murray. Miss Calhoun—I might have recollected before—was, like Miss Lea and Miss Robins, American—but I am to be excused, because she belonged, by temperament and by appearance, to Southern latitudes. Hers was an affluent, an impressive, as it were a semi-Spanish beauty. She played, for a time, with the Bancrofts at the Haymarket; but was seen, I think, to most advantage afterwards, as Hester Prynne, in an adaptation from Hawthorne. I met her first either at Lady Wilde's or at Mrs. Chandler Moulton's.

Miss Achurch—brilliantly acceptable, eminently human, in *The Doll's House*—played

delightfully in another adaptation of the *Scarlet Letter* than that which was prepared for Miss Calhoun; and it was possible, and very interesting, to see the two within a day or so of each other. Each performance had conspicuous and perfectly individual merit; and if a good piece and illuminating acting always got their deserts, the run accorded to both plays would have been longer. I remember that Miss Janet Achurch, in Oakley Street, said to me many penetrating things, that I received gladly, and gave me one piece of information it pierced me to the quick to hear—"Charlie," said she, in answer to my inquiry (she was speaking of Mr. Charles Charrington), "Charlie does *sometimes* read Dickens—reads him when he is tired."

Not very long before these interesting and really gifted young exponents of modern problem-drama were under the impression that the talent of *Ghosts* and of *A Doll's House* overpowered the genius of *Copperfield*, I had followed what were even then the too infrequent performances of Miss Alma Murray —who, with her husband, Mr. Forman, we counted among our friends. I saw her, with Hermann Vezin, I think, it must have been, in *The Cenci*. I saw her, to my infinitely

greater joy—more than that, to my completest satisfaction—in the *In a Balcony* of Browning. Browning himself—who, between Helen Faucit's day and Alma Murray's, had gone very little to the theatre—praised her with characteristic earnestness. For many parts she had disqualifications—in prose she was not very telling—but it is certain that in her we had for a brief space an artist upon whom no subtlety of the Poetic Drama was lost. And she warmed herself, and us, at its fire.

Of French actors—not to speak of those who are in the front, to-day—I have enjoyed in their time Favart and Delaunay, the exponents of Musset at his best: of Musset in the *Nuit d'Octobre.* I have enjoyed Got, as conscientious in his art as in his life: Réjane—yes, she is still with us—in *La Robe Rouge* and in the *Course du Flambeau:* Croizette too—Carolus-Duran's sister-in-law—who had electricity, magnetism: and Helène Petit, who had naturalness, naïveté, normal emotion, and the best of young womanly charm.

From Philippe Burty, in Paris, one of his friends, I heard a good deal, as long ago as in the 'Seventies, concerning Constant Coquelin—the elder and greater Coquelin; for about Coquelin *cadet* there was always

something, quaint and sympathetic if you like, but still well-nigh aggressively *bizarre*. Coquelin was a good deal in the society of Gambetta, at the period I speak of, and it used to be hinted, broadly, that he had a certain political influence — never, perhaps, was it quite asserted that, like the splendid Rubens, he was a great, informal Ambassador. In later years, a corrected version of Coquelin's relations with Gambetta has come to me from a source more distinctly authoritative. It is the one that I believe. Gambetta, when he rose to power, knew little of the ways of the polite world. He was a genuine patriot, but unfamiliar—it seems—with Society's usages in a thousand little circumstances and affairs. Unwittingly—by speech, by silence, by bearing, even by behaviour at table, the very handling of that which was before him—he would, I am assured, transgress the social rule, at every hour. Coquelin, for a while, was about him to tell him of his mistakes. Coquelin, in a difficult situation, would "put him through" —until, in fine, Gambetta, great himself, though also, in his hatred of Napoleon the Third, the enemy of greatness—learnt "his way about."

But that Coquelin, though not the in-

fluential private diplomat he was sometimes considered, was in himself very agreeable company, a man of supple and informed intelligence, whom one would willingly hear speak on any matter — I can myself bear witness. His performances at the Theatre I have never followed with system. Of course, I have often seen him on the stage—oftener when he was at the Français than after he had left it—and sometimes rather incidentally. I mean, the motive of my visit was not often Coquelin. In certain of his more famous parts—in his part in M. Rostand's best-known piece, amongst them—I have missed him altogether. But I am certain that for qualities delicate and tactful, no performance of his on the avowed and public stage was ever better than that which Coquelin "gave," if I may so put it, after a dinner at Henry Arthur Jones's table at the Reform Club, when, in the happiest and most natural manner in the world, he fell to talking—dare I not say, informally lecturing—about Molière. One or other of us present—and the company was not wanting in distinction, for Frederic Harrison was there, James Knowles, Sir Evelyn Wood —said just enough to give him *la réplique* (to be a "feeder" is the English theatrical

phrase): to give him the excuse for going on —and on he went, delightfully, with criticism serious and acute, of which the matter, the main substance, had, I am certain, been long with him, but of which the form was wont to be shaped adroitly, or modified variously, in accordance with the requirements of the actual hour.

XVII

WALTER PATER

THERE appeared, the other day, in the *Academy* newspaper—it does not matter what it was à propos of—an article by Frank Harris, on Pater. The "appreciations" of Mr. Harris are invariably original and courageous. They set one thinking. And so it is no wonder that the article roused in me the inquiry, "Do I agree or disagree, in the main, with this none too flattering portrait of the man—with this none too favourable, yet in no sense malevolent, impression of a most interesting mind, of a reserved and complex and enigmatic personality?"

The very form of the inquiry in a measure answers the question, and I am under no obligation to answer it more definitely. Indirectly it may be answered a little further if I set down my own brief and comparatively superficial—at all events less suggestive—record.

I think I heard of Pater first at the house of John Addington Symonds. In what was

then the study of that admirable Georgian house at Clifton Hill, wherein his father, the physician, had practised before Symonds wrote, there lay upon the table the volume of Essays that had just appeared; and Symonds, my senior, as well as my superior in all knowledge of Academic things, talked to me of Pater, and of the mark this book was certainly making; and of the mark that Pater himself had made at Oxford, as Fellow of Brazenose. Of course I read the book; of course I delighted in its unceasing regard for Style; and I was, I am now inclined to think, even unduly impressed by the personality the book seemed to reveal. Whether I ever shared in the ecstasy that has been occasioned to others by that most ornate passage about the Mona Lisa which has since become so celebrated, really I cannot remember; but I think it unlikely—for the picture itself was never among the things I most cared for. But the book revealed a personality. Pater appeared to one, in it, and in some subsequent writings, as the High Priest of an artistic religion, and as that rare creature, the maker of perfect sentences. As time went on, I looked forward to meeting him.

Whether the first meeting happened at the Hampstead cottage of Charles Appleton

—the Editor of the *Academy* in its first and its most learned days—at Netley Cottage, with Edmund Gosse, I remember, as the third guest of that particular evening (Edmund Gosse, young, blond, and genial, stroking continuously, with contentment, Appleton's faultless cat, to which I also was desirous to do homage)—or whether it happened at the Humphry Wards', at Oxford, where, after seeing the performance of the Greek play at Balliol, I had rushed into a dress-coat for dinner, with a celerity that had beaten any previous record of mine, I cannot certainly say. But, having regard to the swiftness and to some feeling of unusually pleasurable anticipation as to what was immediately to come about—over and above my appreciation of the society of Mrs. Ward and her husband —I should be inclined to say that it was at Oxford that I was first in Pater's presence. Really that does not matter. On both occasions—and often afterwards—I enjoyed meeting him. He had liked very much, it appeared, my little *Pastorals of France*. And I found him from the beginning—wherever the beginning was — extremely agreeable.

Later—I think before we knew his sisters, but when they had just settled in Earl's

Terrace, Kensington — having left Oxford as actual abode—he dined with me at Thurlow Road, in Hampstead: being one of several poets or poetically minded people who arrived from remote parts of the Town—by methods which seemed incongruous. What particular conveyances I would have had these friends, of such exalted minds, take, I honestly cannot say; but I recollect that it did seem to me inappropriate that one of them should have walked up from the Swiss Cottage and the grime of the Underground Railway, and that another should have required to change his shoes in or about our little hall. Rare spirits—once it was Hardy; once Austin Dobson: I could add other names of charm —they deserved fairy-like vehicles, and did not get them. It seemed quite natural that I should myself repair by Hampstead omnibus, to the heart of London, when bent on evening engagements. But, that our suburban door—at which postmen knocked, and many dear, worthy, unillustrious people besides—should open to disclose some great imaginative writer, betrayed by the weather—that, I admit, to the end of the chapter would always seem to me curious.

Let us come to Earl's Terrace: wherein—arrived from Oxford, in whose inner Academic

circles he had always, or often, been held wanting in orthodoxy—Walter Pater dwelt, and dwelt, as Mr. Frank Harris rather superfluously assures us, with perfect propriety (I forget the exact phrase): in an "early Victorian" interior, he takes occasion to let us understand. I should have said a *mid*-Victorian however; for William Morris had inspired the decoration and furnishing, though he had not actually carried them out. They were sad-coloured; dull—the remains of his earlier method. Sage-green, perhaps, here, which absorbs the light as much as sunny green reflects it. And there, terra-cotta red, with no virtue of splendid crimson, which, as Morris himself knew, and later showed us, is not only fine in itself, but blends with a certain blue so admirably—while terra-cotta colour blends with nothing charming in this world at all. But of course there were pleasant pieces of furniture at Pater's; and, doubtless, blue china, and I seem to remember lustre ware—possibly De Morgan's—and prints and photographs worth having before one, and grave books, or a French novel: at the least a *conte* of Merimée's.

Coming to the man himself, Frank Harris's view—interesting partly because it is entirely untinctured by the Academic, and the views

put forth of Pater have too often been young Academic, wholly and unreservedly eulogistic, when they have not been old Academic and drily unfavourable—Mr. Harris's view, I say, is that Walter Pater was a curious contradiction: "he talked little, just as he wrote little, and it was difficult to know him well." Further, "At first he kept to conventional, stereotyped phrases, dropped hesitatingly, almost timidly. He never became confidential, even when writing." And again, "Pater belonged by Nature to the fraternity of the Faithless. This world filled his horizon." As to his appearance, and as to its significance, "The jaws were strong enough to keep the desires in leash, and so the great dome of the forehead, where thoughts had room to pause and swing on wings of rhythm, came to mastery."

To quote these phrases, turned so admirably, and with at least their reasonable share of insight, affords occasion for producing my own mental notes, amplifying, modifying, or contradicting some of the points these phrases raise, or, it may be, even some of the statements they make. I do not remember that Pater "talked little"; though he did not talk conspicuously much. What he said, was not so much "conventional"—I think—as measured, tolerant, judicial. If his remarks—

those apt to be made, it is implied, in the earlier stages of an acquaintance—were ever "stereotyped," they were stereotyped by himself alone. They were not other people's. His "That is quite true," very slowly uttered—uttered *staccato*—had an impressive effect, as of grateful meditation; and I believe I have found myself sometimes wondering whether it was extended, out of sheer politeness, to cover the reception of the sufficiently obvious, as well as of the happily surprising; since not only the new thought, but the obvious thought, may have truth, and "That is quite true" may mean "That is quite unnecessary." William Sharp, I remember, told me—but to William Sharp, with his Celtic imagination, much strange experience was vouchsafed—that Pater could follow at one and the same time two currents of meditation: that he could think out, quite calmly, in the recesses of his mind, some elaborate problem, while taking part in, and apparently being absorbed in, the discussion of some trivial topic. This was an alarming revelation; discounting, if one believed it in its entirety, the value of the "That is quite true."

Then, as to Pater never becoming confidential "even when writing," I should have thought that a good deal of his mental analysis,

in the Essays, in the *Imaginary Portraits*, in the *Marius the Epicurean*—not to speak of one fragmentary piece more strictly auto-biographical—was so personal that it may be almost called "confidential" too. But I think Pater's confidences were more for the many than for the individual—more for the *type* than for the individual, rather—for the type, that is, that he imagined as receptive of his work ; though the impression is on me, I allow, that from that type also he held something back. His confidences may never have been complete. To no one, in any case—to no one, either real or ideal—did he perfectly unbosom himself; did he lie bare and open, as did Rousseau. Lastly, if he "belonged by Nature to the fraternity of the Faithless"—his horizon, this present world—the passage of time, and many a reflection, and perhaps many a craving, wrought in him, I imagine, at least as much change as deepening experiences wrought in the end on his own Marius, who, passing onwards, willingly suffered himself to be fortified by the rites of a belief not ancient in that Roman day, indeed, but at all events destined to be long-lived.

Upon my appealing to Pater once, to be moved by some singular exhibition of womanly beauty, more probably in Art than in Life, he

responded, I remember, but coldly; though he sought for an explanation of his attitude—or had it at hand. His life at Oxford, he said, had made him so much more familiar with the beauty of boyhood, the beauty of male youth. One must have known Pater a good deal better than I did, to know whether, at all—in days remote or recent—he had ever had a love affair. His description of Mona Lisa—"*la Joconde*"—does not suggest it: what there fascinated him was the weird mystery of an expression: little else. Yet Marius appears sensible of the attraction of the graceful, good, young Christian mother, who was his friend—who influenced him; and in Marius, the Epicurean and the quasi-convert, I have always seemed, as I have implied before, to detect a little of Walter Pater. But certainly, from his imaginative as well as from his critical writings, Love interest—"female interest," as the actor or the conventional dramatist calls it, when he holds it to be indispensable—is, on the whole, strangely and conspicuously absent: perhaps even more absent than it is from the writings of Louis Stevenson.

He was not of a long-lived race. A certain weakness of the heart, which, as time advanced, did not diminish, caused him perhaps to hold habitually before him the ideal of

restraint, and of a close and narrow measure of even the most permissible joys. Nor, after all, do I think that he required, as much as some men, to "burn with a hard, gem-like flame." I do not imagine Pater excited—stirred at all to the depths—by admirable Humanity, or by noble Landscape, or by the profoundest Art. Rather, it was his function to contemplate pleasurably; to reflect sagaciously—and then, with nicety and charm, to record.

XVIII

HENRY IRVING

BEFORE ever I knew Henry Irving personally, I had watched with admiration and interest—and in each case more than once—three of the greatest, subtlest, of his Stage creations: Digby Grant in *Two Roses*, Mathias in *The Bells*, and, last of the three, his Hamlet. Then, when he was still playing Hamlet, Mrs. Wynne, the pleasant widow of a Welsh squire—who, by the marriage of her youngest brother to the famous Miss Bateman, became nearly connected with Irving's manager, and of course knew Irving—asked me to dine, one Sunday night, to meet him; and, on arriving, I saw, in quiet talk, leaning against the mantelpiece in the back drawing-room, a slender, pale-faced student—himself the very Hamlet.

He was, as everybody who ever met him in Society knows absolutely well, entirely simple, modest, chatty, unaffected. And—notwithstanding his absorption in his work—he was one of the comparatively few actors who do

not seek to talk about the Theatre. Often, of course, he *had* to talk about it. He cared too profoundly for his profession and his art not to be interested in talking about it, to any one of reasonable intelligence upon the subject, whether really expert or not. But, in chance meetings with him, unless you had broached the Theatre, the chances were that you would get a friendly little "tip," such as, "If you are ever in that direction, the 'Cock' is still an excellent place at which to get a chop." Or you might be told, "No, I take as little salt as I can possibly manage with. I am told salt gives you rheumatism."

Not long after the meeting, at Mrs. Wynne's, Mr. Bateman asked me to the Lyceum, to see the "Hundredth" consecutive performance of *Hamlet*, and to sup. If I remember rightly, that was before the days when suppers at the Lyceum were served on the stage side of the curtain. We supped, I think, in a largish room looking upon Wellington Street. I sat by Mr. Critchett, the oculist —Sir Anderson's father—then elderly, while I was very young. "You have good eyes," he said, having looked at me keenly—and when I think of it I remember that they certainly have served me well, a whole generation since then: examining performances and people,

manuscripts, pictures, prints. "Very close work does not hurt decent eyes." And I think Critchett added, "I have never"—or perhaps it was "seldom"—"had a watchmaker as a patient."

Irving entered late, and, with what I afterwards learnt to recognize as his even unsurpassable modesty. He went round to a quiet corner that had been kept for him. Charles Dickens the younger—one of the best after-dinner speakers of his time—proposed a Toast, later in the night, and to that, or to another, Irving replied, with words few and appropriate, and then he slid into a story or two, which he told in the best vein of gentle comedy.

After that, I used occasionally to go to see him behind the scenes; but never, as I considered, very fruitfully. On the whole I am against excursions from stall or box to tiring-rooms—I am talking of interviews that happen while the play is still in progress, and the actor occupied of necessity a good deal with his "make-up," with the last touches of his dressing for the next act, or for his next entry. All talk is on the surface of things. But Irving was, to my mind, a personality so magnetic, so subtle, and so complex, that it was impossible to find nothing of interest,

nothing that was characteristic, even at such interviews. Besides, other people of a certain mark were sure to be in and out. I remember once it was Sir James Knowles—already a friend of mine—and the talk was of Sir Theodore Martin and his spouse, "the immortal Helen." Another time, it was W. P. Frith, the popular Academician, who had an interest in the Theatre as genuine as Knowles's, and perhaps more strictly practical, though less keenly critical—an average actor's interest, more than that of a peculiarly cultivated man. But that is not to say at all that Frith had not a keen dramatic sense. His pictures, of themselves, prove that he had. However, from a remark of Irving's when Frith, on this occasion, had taken his departure, I gathered that he had vexed Irving a little by believing him to be incapable of that in which he had soon afterwards confessedly succeeded. What the part was, does not matter. Frith knew the actor had succeeded, and so had, in his brief visit, complimented Irving; but Irving's benediction—"God bless you!"—as he went, followed him to the door and beyond it, from rather distant heights—indicating almost that the ingenious painter would be a peculiarly fitting object of help and succour. "Bless you!"—and a turn to me, as soon as the

Academician was beyond ear-shot. "He *thought* I could not do it!" On the stage, one night, the instant the curtain had fallen, Irving, rather absent-mindedly, introduced me to Ellen Terry. "I knew him *before you were born*, Henry!" was the remark that followed this introduction. Very characteristic of Miss Terry was that picturesque and gracious exaggeration,

Much more fruitful was it to see Henry Irving when he laid himself out for seeing one—was without preoccupation, and could allow his temperament—never itself really restless—to take its meditative, social rest. Once pleasantly in the country; twice or thrice at private dinners in that room at the Garrick Club that to the right of the door, on the ground floor, looks out into King Street, did I so see him. He talked something very nearly his best on those occasions; and he got other people to talk something very nearly their best also. Edmund Yates, Hamilton Aïdé, Sir Squire Bancroft, Sir George Lewis, George Boughton, the late Sir Frederick Pollock, are but a few of those whom I remember as being very pleasant at his table. At H. D. Traill's, at the Henry Arthur Jones's, and at other houses, of course, have I seen Irving with interest. The very

last time, in the drawing-room after dinner, when I had done anything but force myself upon him—he drew up his chair, I recollect, to talk of a given subject with an air of leisureliness that is itself restful and rest-begetting. Often I was quite content to watch him. He was more interesting than any character he played. In unexpected ways the charm of his personality came out. It must be a full generation now since at a garden-party I was the witness of his introduction to Madame Taglioni: then living, old but vivacious, in Connaught Square—and giving still to very chosen pupils a few dancing lessons. It was in French that Taglioni talked. But in French—if I may put it that way—in French Irving preferred to be silent. He made amends for silence by gesture. He bowed over the hand of the seated lady—kissed her hand with deference, the homage of expressive eyes, and a smile that said it was a crowning moment: nothing less. And I am sure that Madame Taglioni cherished in her mind —among the spoils of age—a charmed recollection of that interview.

It has never been anything short of a matter of wonder to me, when people—talking to me about him—have doubted whether Irving was a great actor. That he was an actor with

abounding faults, some awkwardness, some mannerism, some disabilities, I do not question in the least. And all the denials, that I have ever heard, of his being a great actor, have resolved themselves into this—that he was an actor with faults. All sorts of cultivated people, expressing their incredulity—from Canon Ainger downwards, or from Canon Ainger upwards (for his was really neither a height nor a depth: he only wrote, with a measure of learned dullness, an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* that Irving happened to talk to me about)—all sorts of cultivated people then, were either by temperament or prejudice, or amiable prepossession for somebody no longer present, betrayed into mistake in this matter.

But the best part of the English Theatre was never for an instant so betrayed. A pretty, rather vain American actress said to me, once—in a reflective parenthesis—"but Irving is not an *actor*"; and Mrs. Terry, who had seen and lived with Macready and the Charles Keans, said to me, forty years ago, "*Isn't* he great?" It was she, and not the young lady who had not got her engagement, who reflected the instinct of the profession—of its most capable members—its members at "the top of the basket." And the best part of the

French theatrical world—the people at the Théâtre Français, twenty and thirty years ago (some of them, happily, alive and prospering still to-day)—was of precisely that opinion. The great French actors of Irving's time, who, during their visits to London, saw Irving with alert curiosity and trained attention, all, I think, found him a great artist. Generally, even, they forgot his imperfections, in their sense of the presence of a great personality —of a comrade who had probed his matter to the core.

The younger generation, that in his last years—after he had left the Lyceum—Irving gathered about him, repeated, I am delighted to remember, the wholesome enthusiasm which had possessed those of us who were the younger generation in the 'Seventies and 'Eighties. But in the interval—and especially in the later years of his tenure of, or of his appearance at, the Lyceum—there was, in more quarters than one, a certain cynical indifference to Irving; attributable, in limited measure, to conditions of his health which did affect his performances—there were times when his utterance, which at his best could be so nobly expressive, was singularly indistinct and ineffective. The absence of his fullest strength, and a certain want of impulse—those were the

days of many discouragements—tended to accentuate his mannerisms. There were occasions on which the very personal magnetism seemed lacking, and the firmly possessed knowledge of his business, and the Irving manner, had to do duty for the soul and for the sensitive art which had withdrawn into the background and were no more seen. But he emerged finally—though alas! only for the so brief remainder of his days—from the bad period, when established at Drury Lane; and his performances in the revival of *Becket*—which gave occasion for perhaps the worthiest, assuredly for the most sympathetic, of his pictures of great Churchmen—were of amazing dignity and feeling. At the end—when, in reality, a danger of complete collapse attended him in each exacting performance—he learned to save himself from something of the merely physical task and strain. What he gave us then was the refined gold of his art and nature. Nothing is so difficult as to class great actors—their past is past so completely: there is no dead man's landscape hanging on the wall as living evidence of his accomplishment: no poet's book to turn to and reopen: no book with its renewed appeal—but, for my own part, if I read theatrical history rightly, I must suffer no

English actors but Garrick and Edmund Kean to stand by Irving's side.

A yet younger generation—that has had no chance of seeing Irving at all—has arisen, since he is dead ; and with my eye upon them, and on those others who know nothing of the actor's earlier and most productive time, I shall allow myself to enumerate, in a last paragraph or two about him, what seem to me outstanding moments in performances through a career I somewhat studiously followed.

The Digby Grant, of Albery's *Two Roses*, as Irving at the Vaudeville presented him, was a blend of Pecksniff and Turveydrop, with, in his polished pretentiousness, the style and the refinement of a later time, and, more particularly, of a better social world. As it is given to-day to Mr. Hawtrey, pre-eminently, to lie with charm, so it was given to Irving, forty years ago, to be pretentious and hypocritical with good breeding. To be that, he needed to be inventive ; and the imaginative portrait—so quietly dramatic, so bringing into the foreground the inner man in Digby Grant—received, I think, its finest touch in the scene in which the testimonial, got up by himself for the most part, is presented to Digby Grant, to his extreme surprise and gratified

bewilderment, in presence of the village crowd, and the obligation rests upon him—and he is chivalrously in a hurry to discharge it—to return thanks in a speech. Anxious that nobody shall fail to be the witness of his gratitude, he mounts a kitchen or a cottage chair, in nervous agitation, and with one most artful and revealing stumble. His feelings are too much for him. It was the cleverest imaginable little bit of *genre* painting—a thing appropriate to Comedy alone.

Then, in *The Bells* you had melodrama, but psychological melodrama—and I have heard Irving, in conversation, defend even the melodrama that is unconcerned with psychology. The nervous apprehensions of Mathias—who had been betrayed into this murder—had been apparent from the beginning; but the Mathias of Irving was strong enough at first to cope with what he deemed the possibilities of suspicion. But tension tells upon him: gradually undermines him; and after the prolonged and dreadful labours of his dream, he springs or struggles to a chair, and dies awfully. To have seen that performance was to have supped full of horrors. The first time I saw it, it affected me so much that in going homewards in a hansom, I felt obliged to resist the closing down of the window, though I had for my

companion only a wholly innocent and gentle friend who was my guest.

At the "first night" of *Hamlet*, under the Bateman management—the night on which Irving, lifted into creditable notoriety by *Two Roses* and *The Bells*, first took his definite place, from which, whatever might be the variations of public favour, he was not afterwards ousted—the charm and the appropriateness of his earlier scenes, and the beauty of the actor's delivery of the soliloquies, made an impression, or confirmed an impression which, from the rising of the curtain, had been favourable; but it was not until the play-scene that Irving, with his compelling show of wild excitement, drove it home to people that here were dramatic effects not seen, at the latest, since the days of Macready.

After that triumph, in how many pieces, during how many years, what great moments! And if I say "moments" I am not unwilling to emphasize the fact that Irving's was an art of endlessly considered detail. Touch upon touch built up his impressiveness. The right relations of all these ingenious, well-imagined details—the welding them in this wise into a whole that had unity—gave him his breadth; but it was breadth got very differently from the breadth of the *doyen* of the Français, the

now venerable, always capable Mounet Sully, with his art of large neglect of detail—his art of concentration on great gesture, great voice, great mien.

I remember Irving telling me—many weeks before his "first" of *Macbeth*—that he was going into the country, to lie in a hammock in a Gloucestershire garden, and "have a tug at the Thane of Cawdor." It was "a tug" always—that understanding a character as Shakespeare drew it, and then that thinking himself into it by which there became identified with each other the actor and the art. His Macbeth was reasonably successful: a universal favourite it by no means grew to be. But his imagination followed faultlessly, it seemed to me, the fortunes of the Thane, and towards the end—with its braced diction of the great Fifth Act and, best of all, of that act's latest scenes—the actor got his cue for allowing decisiveness to pass onwards into wild desperation. His Othello I do not remember clearly. That his Iago had subtlety and slyness and a wicked cunning, was a matter of course. So had his Mephistopheles —to the point of loathsomeness. So had his Louis the Eleventh, and to boot, in its execution, it had the deliberate certainty, the detailed exactness, of a Holbein. I did, I

recollect, a little resent that the version of the story Irving used gave no opportunity for any human touch, except that characteristic touch, for Louis Onze, of an enjoyed familiarity with the low-bred. But in Casimir Delavigne's drama—in the old man's sense not of craven fear but of essential loneliness—there are hints of pathos and regret.

The Romeo of Irving has been held up to ridicule. He was already a little too old for this embodiment of headstrong love, when he first took the part, and, unlike Delaunay, who sighed out till old age the romantic verses of Alfred de Musset, he could not conceal his years. Had Irving lived in the suburbs, he too might have run after an omnibus—daily, as an approved gymnastic, fitting him for the theatre. But if the very figure of Irving, more than his actual age, contributed to disqualify him for Romeo, what other actor has appeared to our eyes as so consumed with virile passion? Moments of homage there were which compared fairly well with Irving's wooing—with flushed face, and craving eyes—of Anne, in *Richard the Third.* And again, has there ever been shown us a Romeo who put the force that Irving put into those lines to the Apothecary about the poison he had bought from him and the "worse poison" of money—

"Here's gold for thee"—which Romeo was now placing in the Apothecary's hands? The lines are too philosophical for Romeo; but that was Shakespeare's fault: not the Lyceum player's. *He* had but to render them. And it is safe and interesting to conclude that an actor of the calibre of Irving, appearing in his least appropriate part, finds means to throw new light, somewhere or other, and, in the midst of a foreseen failure, scores some unsuspected success.

XIX

WHISTLER, HADEN, LEGROS

A GENERATION ago, three great artists, working here in England, were in the midst of their conspicuous successes, in the art they practised best. They were the three most famous Etchers of the last half of the Nineteenth Century: perhaps of the whole Nineteenth Century—save Méryon. It was the time of the Revival of Etching, and I speak of Seymour Haden, Whistler, and Legros—each one a man of striking individuality of character. I knew them all, more or less well; and it is a pleasure to recollect—whatever failings or peculiarities one had to recognize and make allowance for—how much they all stood out as interesting personalities: head and shoulders above most of those fellow-executants who were their contemporaries: head and shoulders above the average educated person. Each one of them, on your acquaintance with him, could contribute something to your knowledge of Life, and your vision of it. You were in contact not only

with brilliant performers, but with beings sensitive, receptive, and communicative: with spirits who observed, and thought, and felt.

But all that Mr. Whistler succeeded, or endeavoured to "contribute" or "communicate" to me, the first time that I met him—sitting opposite to him at a friend's at dinner—was, I am bound to admit, an impression wholly unfavourable. By his own written account (a letter, since printed, which, when I read it, a few years ago, did not strike me as conspicuous for accuracy), he set out with the intention of being curiously disagreeable, directly he knew who I was. He may have owed nothing to me as a fellow-guest—that is "neither here nor there"—but something, in any case, he owed to his hostess—sitting between us—and that something he entirely forgot. Remarks definitely intended to be "nasty" to me—and which of course I was to hear—he planted on our hostess with decision. She tried to stop him; but it was impossible. He was continuously aggressive. His brassy laugh rang out louder and louder, more and more penetrating, at each produced example of his triumphant rudeness.

Next time—but when it was, or how long afterwards, I forget—the strange creature of

genius was in milder and more chastened mood. It is hardly likely, though, that when that "next time" came—however long afterwards—I was myself particularly *prévenant*. For what was I to expect? Still, there was no friction. And, later, things improved. Walter Sickert's pleasantness—or his facile sense of comedy; but I think it was the former—caused me to be seated by Whistler at a congratulatory Dinner of the New English Art Club, where the sometime provocative painter said pleasant things about me in a speech, and I warned him, with equal publicity, that I was elusive, exceedingly. Later still, the gentleness of Mr. Malcolm Salaman did its part, I think, in bringing us together; and of Whistler himself—as far as personal intercourse is concerned—all my remaining memories are agreeable. Staff in hand, as the comrade who would also be the instructor, he has led me round his picture galleries.

I have seen him at home, in the whitest Summer raiment, of a London July, mixing cooling yet not unstimulating drinks for me. I have seen him print impressions of his etchings, and, guided by the result, stopping after the examination of each proof to add what seemed to him desirable dry-point

touches on the copper. I have seen him withdrawing himself from easel and from canvas, with an admiring and delighted "Amazing!" as he apprehended the height of his achievement. This was at the Vale —a modest, narrow house, in some quiet back-water off the Chelsea main road—a house in which there was not much then gathered, but a house at least in which everything was simple, and nothing ugly. The white cloth lay habitually—all day—on the dinner-table. There was English silver of the simple, classical time — that 1790 that I love the most, for its form, refined and purified. There was a little late Georgian furniture; a little blue china; neat matting on the floor, and a background of primrose yellow.

Seymour Haden, great etcher, brilliant surgeon, and may I allow myself to add, excellent and convincing writer—and "*Bien écrire, c'est bien penser*," Buffon says—I first met at a small dinner at the Burlington Club. Rubicund, energetic, enthusiastic, and at the same time with a captivating appearance of being judicial, he passed from discussions upon Fine Art to discussions upon Earth burial—he was all for wicker-baskets, flower-piled, and quick dissolution. That was at a period at which, I remember, Seymour Haden was—

for all his then conceded triumphs in Etching —still practising as a high-class general practitioner; and my first remembrance of him as a guest of his (to see some of his Old Masters' drawings, perhaps) in Hertford Street, is of his standing at his door, shouting to an infirm, grave gentleman of saddened colour, in an open landau, "Goodbye, Archbishop!" and, when the carriage had moved off, turning to me to say, significantly, "The Archbishop is very old"—which meant, rather, that Tait, respected and beloved, was ill, hopelessly.

Not very long after that time, Seymour Haden abandoned practice, and Hertford Street, and, revelling in the clearer light of the country, escaping from the crowded dwellings of Mayfair, took possession of an old manor-house, with the modern-sounding name of "Woodcote," in the neighbourhood of Alresford, upon the sweep of the low Hampshire chalk Downs. There I remember spending a short succession of pleasant days with him and Lady Haden and their daughter-in-law and her young friend Miss Russell—Miss Russell taking me, the day that I was leaving, to see a very beautiful Romney portrait, whose home was at her mother's at Petersfield. Herkomer had preceded me as

a guest at the Hadens', and they had all been interested in him—in his ready intellect, and the profundity and completeness of his absorption in every branch of his work.

By this time, Sir Seymour had not entirely, but still had chiefly, given up Etching. After his abandonment of London life, not many were his performances upon the copper. But apart from walks and drives and occupations about his small estate—and a small estate, I have noticed, may seem to have as many claims upon its owner's own time as a great one—Seymour Haden had the literary interest of a generally cultivated man (I remember he suffered me to read Poetry to him); and furthermore, he was the Curator, the careful curator, of his own collection—and to be the watchful curator of your own collection is itself a pursuit. Print after print, pile after pile of prints, abode, most delicately enwrapped, most legibly numbered and named, on shelf after shelf of a chamber disposed like a large linen-room, and never suffered to get damp in the very least degree. It was on the warm side of dryness. Thinking of Richard Fisher, an already deceased brother-collector and friend, who dreaded exposing delicate and valuable prints, in any numbers, to the vicissitudes of a country temperature,

even on the hill-top at Midhurst, and so had rooms in the heart of London, within a stone's-throw of the Museum Print Room, that there at least his collection might be safe, I asked Seymour Haden, I remember, if he had never had any fear, and he touched his walls, and said "They are three feet thick" —I think it was. Fine Prints, which are of the fragility of an American consumptive, were thus provided for.

Among a score—a hundred—people and subjects that we talked about freely, in those leisurely days at Woodcote, Haden and I got back to Whistler pretty often: in so many ways he interested us both. "The longer I live, the more I admire Whistler as an artist," said Haden of his brother-in-law; or rather of his step-brother-in-law (for Lady Haden was but Whistler's half-sister), "The longer I live, the more I admire Whistler as an artist, and the more I feel it to be my business to avoid him as a man."

But then again—a pleasant light breaking out over his face—"Yet Whistler was quite *lovable*, as a youth. Something turned him; something warped him—I don't know what." And then, after a moment or two of quiet reflection, "I am sure I don't wish him any ill!" It was incompatibility of temperament

—and heat on Haden's part, and "cussedness" (if one may use the word) on Whistler's—that had really separated them—that had made separation necessary.

And when I was alone with Lady Haden, who retained a real affection for the man for whom she had done so much while he was yet a boy, Lady Haden would put this or that question to me about him; and I could see that, at that period, he was not a person whom she discussed in the presence of her spouse—her spouse, an autocrat; benevolent, I know; but an autocrat still.

Haden was far too broad-minded an artist not to recognize the greatness of the third great Etcher of his time apart from Méryon—Alphonse Legros. He may not have had particular sympathy with him. Their temperaments were unlike. The one was optimist and energetic. About the other, there was a little—not of the pessimist, but of the fatalist—a good deal of the *laissez-aller*. But this at all events they had in common—and of this, Whistler, save in some personal affections, gave no sign—each had a deep, abiding, constantly present sense of Life's seriousness and importance; of the grave issues of every human fate. "*Je trouve la vertu dans la correction de la forme*"—the creed of Théophile Gautier

—excellent as long as it does not pass beyond the walls of a studio—was not a sentiment either Legros or Haden would have approved; though there were hours when each might in a sense have understood it.

It was when Legros was a Professor—Slade Professor of Fine Art at University College, London—that I saw most of him, and that most was not a great deal, but it was of a kind to make me always desirous of seeing him again and soon; and regretful I was, often, of accidents that kept me from him. For, with this grave Burgundian—with this child of Dijon (Lulli's birthplace and Bossuet's), who had a touch of slow and stately Spanish seriousness—you felt you were in contact with a rich nature: a soul that had suffered and deepened. Legros had known hardships: long want of appreciation—and to amuse himself from day to day had never been his ideal. All his seriousness—his sense of the *macabre* even, which was dominant in his earlier years—is reflected in his work. There is his sense of pathos, and of quietude, and of calm beauty, and of the little that must needs suffice. What is not reflected in his work, is his humour—for it was rather English humour than Gallic wit, but yet had Gallic neatness. Legros could say a thing satirically. He could enliven and bedeck

with Fancy his discourse. He could laugh—he could stretch out the situation that made laughter possible and natural—but there lurked always in the background his knowledge of "the tears of things."

Like Haden, he was distinguished by the cordiality of his appreciation of the work of others; but his appreciation was extended less widely, because with his own time, he was, on the whole, far less in sympathy. I am tired of calling Legros what I have called him so often, "a belated Old Master." But is there anything else that one can call him as truly? Dignity, austerity, reticence, a large economy of means—they were the characteristics of Legros, and they were the characteristics of all the greater masters who came between the Primitives (who were learning their business) and the charm of the Eighteenth Century. Dürer and Holbein, Poussin and Mantegna, and, not so visibly perhaps, but not less truly, Rembrandt, were at the base of Legros's art, and gave it its stability, if not its impulse. Rembrandt was the master he most of all revered; and of the Moderns it is characteristic that Alfred Stevens—our English sculptor and our noble draughtsman—was the person that Legros was most of all anxious to press into recognition.

I have said, that was "characteristic." It was not in the least unnatural. For Alfred Stevens, like Legros himself, was a man of the Renaissance—a man of the Renaissance born out of his due time; born late, into our colder, weaker day.

XX

LECTURING AND READING

THE differences in audiences are at the least as great as are the differences between the persons who address them. But it takes a lecturer or reader a certain amount of practice, thoroughly to grasp those differences, and, even in a limited degree, to turn to account, in his performance, that which he has succeeded in noting. Although I have not either lectured or read very extensively, or with much continuity, it does happen that I have addressed audiences of widely different kinds, in widely different places. I have done so with ever-growing interest in the work and its conditions. And perhaps a few of my experiences, and one or two of my deductions, may be set down here.

First, let me say, that, taking count, I hope, a little of my personal idiosyncrasies, I—though I have my views, like other people—have never attempted to appear on platforms political or social. Also, if now and again, an after-dinner speech has been politely wrung from me,

it has been wrung from me with lively unwillingness on my part. After-dinner speaking is an art of its own—subject to laws of its own—and I have never, I think, even begun to master them. Such utterances as I have made—and as I have enjoyed making—in front of the public, have been comments, and more or less "criticisms"—in the sense of appreciation, much more than of fault-finding—on the Art of Literature, or on the Art that is pictorial. I have lectured on Balzac, and on the Short Story, and on Charles Dickens, popular and great; and on Rembrandt, Turner, Méryon—one or two others—great personalities in the arts of Colour and Line. And in reading—in public reading for the most part dissociated from critical comment—I have confined myself to the Literature that is imaginative: I have read great Poetry, not a line of which I could ever have written, and have read short stories: sometimes by Masters of the craft, and sometimes my own.

The first deduction I arrive at from such experiences as I have had, is, that in the delivery of the matter in hand, while correctness and appropriateness are to be obtained only by the study of detail, *breadth* must never be lost sight of: breadth must be the first thing of all. But that is truer of the Reading than of the

Lecture. It is difficult to apply it, fully, to the Lecture; and, in the Lecture, so far as it can be applied at all, "breadth" has to take the form of a certain simplicity and large variety of more or less obvious effects—the alternation, for instance, of the humorous, or at all events the light, with passages of solid information or of earnest assertion of belief. And that is a matter of composition, of course, more than of delivery.

In the Reading—the delivery, that is, of Imaginative Literature, in prose or poetry—breadth seems to me of the first importance—general effect—the *ensemble;* though here again, the *ensemble*, to be good at all, must have been studied in every one of its parts. But it must be broad first. It will not be good merely because it is broad; but it can *never* be good unless insignificance and pettiness—the prying, minute, long-sighted view, so to call it—be eschewed altogether, and the breadth, once got, maintained carefully, never overlaid as the result of consideration of detail. In this connection, I am reminded of the phrase of Mrs. Stirling, that accomplished English actress, who, in her later life, gave lessons in what is called Elocution—I am reminded of the word she was in the habit of launching from one end of the room to the other—from

the end where she sat, to the end where there stood before her, a young woman, a friend of mine, who was at that time her pupil. At the close of a passage, Mrs. Stirling would condescend to no other comment than the utterance of this word, and the repetition of it—"Bigger, my dear! Bigger." The passage, begun again by the pupil, was now quickly interrupted. "Bigger!" And, yet again, "Bigger, bigger, my dear!" Nothing else. My young friend thought Mrs. Stirling not meant quite, by Nature or by Art, to be a teacher of Elocution. As an actress, authoritative; but as professor, wanting in resource. Yet Mrs. Stirling's first and most cryingly needed business, was to attack and bear down the pettiness of the amateur.

Such elocution as I learnt, I learnt first from my old schoolmaster, Till Adam Smith—a Quaker, with the deepest appreciation of grave Poetry—an appreciation deep as was John Bright's itself—and next (and that was many years afterwards) I hope I learnt something from Walter Lacy, the hale old actor of comedy and of romantic drama, who was at that time engaged, more or less, at the Lyceum, under Irving. I used to visit him at his rooms in Maddox Street, to receive my lessons. His teaching had nothing dogmatic

in it—it was not with servility that one was invited to follow him. He aroused one's intelligence—he set one thinking and planning for oneself. I read a little Comedy with him. But his favourite teaching book was Milton's *Comus*. In *Comus*—in every line of *Comus:* almost in every word—he found means of instruction: the material for wise comment, for judicious admonition. Walter Lacy was an interesting man. He inspired one with liking, as well as with respect. And I was sorry when in process of time, the lease falling in, the small and narrow house—a lodging-house—which he inhabited, in Maddox Street, was pulled down. Go, Lacy must. Years had passed. He was getting very old. He was getting dependent. Professing Elocution no longer at the Royal Academy of Music—then in Hanover Square—acting no longer at the Lyceum; still dragging himself, no doubt, from time to time to the Garrick—I mean of course the Club, and not the Theatre—he took up his abode at a place, half tavern or eating-house and half hotel—the "Phœnix"—off Oxford Street, a simple and prosaic retreat—and it was there, I think, that, well cared for, as I understood, he died: full of years, and not, at the last, unhonoured.

The second deduction, from my not very

abundant experience, is that you can never treat—or, at all events, count upon treating—any two audiences in exactly the same way. This is more particularly true of Lecturing: it is true, though in a lesser degree, of Reading. Actors do not, I think, feel this necessity for differentiation, as much as lecturers and readers do; and for the simple reason that a long "run"—any "run"—brings them, night after night, in contact with audiences that, though they are not of the same people, are of the same *kind* of people. Actors, however, feel the difference between one *town* and another. And it is with the place, more than anything, that the conditions vary. Now, in lecturing or reading, no one has any "run" at all. Change of place is constant—therefore change in the *class* of audience, or in its habit, or disposition. With a written lecture, one does well, I think, to make some allowance for this in advance; and even in reading—reading with little or no critical comment—what is good for one audience is often not, throughout the length of it, good for another. In addition to any allowance or modification made in advance, it is well, it seems to me, to be observant at the time of delivery, and to be ready, if the need presents itself, to make slight changes and suppressions

—occasionally even, explanatory and conversational additions. Then, as long as an audience remains quite still, even though you get no applause, you may be fairly safe—for there is a class of audience, not necessarily stupid, but a little phlegmatic, that makes you no acknowledgment till all is over. And there is no audience that will remain quite still, if it is bored seriously. But the moment there is any sign of fidgeting, take in your sail. Cut technicalities, wherever it is possible: if there is now any sign of boredom, a single dull passage will bore people more, much more, than it would have bored them at starting. In Reading, there are audiences before which it is desirable to heighten the comic, and other audiences before which it is desirable to heighten the poetic effect. Go with the tide. Get into sympathy, as much as you can, with the mood of the audience of the particular night—which means generally, as I have said before, with the audience of the particular place. That is what I should say to one who is entirely a beginner.

Obviously, the room in which you appear affects you. Its size, its shape, and even its appointments. Effects suited to one room may be found out of keeping with another. I have shouted in a Corn Exchange at Kirk-

caldy, and have shouted, not perhaps enough, in the large hall of the Midland Institute at Birmingham. Would the method adopted, or sought to be adopted, at both these places, possibly, have been suited in the least to an audience of critical and student-like young men and women in the prettily proportioned Sever Hall at Harvard, or before the fine ladies and the professors at Baltimore, in the rooms of the Johns Hopkins University, or even in front of the *beau décor* (as a Frenchman well described it to me) of the long saloon of the Villa at Cannes that was built for Monsieur Persigny—a foreign Minister of the Second Empire? Would it have suited even the admirable theatre of the London Institution?—a place neither large nor small, and not at all beautiful—simply workmanlike: a place in which I think you require something between the method for the public hall and the method for the drawing-room. The audience, there, is not so close to you that you need fear to "produce" yourself—there is room for your effects, if you have them. And yet no part of it is remote. And there, as in any regular theatre, except a very large one, the placing of the people —their concentration—is such that it begets cordiality—a little electricity even—unless you are not to be tolerated at all.

Persons bent upon instructing their hearers, may like Lecturing, and not like Reading. For myself, I prefer Reading. Being too desperately conscientious, I expect—or is it only because one likes to air one's little "fads" and preach one's little gospel, even with the possibility of wearying men?—there is no lecture of mine that has not several dull and a few difficult moments. But Reading—and more particularly reading Poetry—is from first to last a joy. As mere physical exercise, it is, to its practitioner, pleasurable. And then, than any lecture, it is so much more your own. Perhaps you have written nothing of that which you read. But you read it because you love it, and can identify yourself with it. For yourself at least you have the interest of narrative and character, rhythm's music, the charm of wit, and the blissful thrill of emotion.

XXI

MRS. KENDAL

IF I were asked what English player, prominently on the boards during at least the greater number of my playgoing days, had impressed me most, after Irving—had given me most effectually that *nouveau frisson* to receive which is perhaps our greatest gratification at the Theatre—it would not be a man's name that I should cite in answer. It would be a woman's—Mrs. Kendal's. And in naming this artist I should remember that I had taken into account four facts or circumstances or conditions contributory to the decision I had come to—first, length of service; then variety of brilliant performance; then the possession of the artist's temperament; then the complete and firmly held acquisition of an elaborate and mainly concealed art. What Mrs. Kendal was, in her extreme youth, it happens that my first chapter has thinly sketched. The sketch—weak even in outline—shall be supplemented (I cannot say filled up) by a brief reference to the particular quality of her later achieve-

ments. Of these achievements, one or two are of thirty years ago, at least. But again, one or two are, as it were, of yesterday.

The performance of Galatea, in Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea*, at the Haymarket, was one of the first—perhaps actually the first of young Mrs. Kendal's serious triumphs. She was the ideal Galatea. Waking from the stone, this new slim being had an *âme végétale*, yet more truly than Ingres's "Source." Then she grew human; but in mind a child. Everything was novel, and to be slowly apprehended. In the *naïvéte* of her awakening intelligence there was admirable comedy. Later, there was feeling. Last of all, as the figure, now sensitive, must turn once more to marble, there were regrets—poignant but in the voice and face—for an experience forgone, or an experience prematurely closed. That First night at the Haymarket was an exciting one for the audience. Exciting, too, it must have been for "Miss Madge Robertson"—it left the greatness of her career scarcely any more in doubt.

It is natural, I think, that the first brilliant success should have been, mainly, a success in Comedy—and this notwithstanding a saying on the Stage in France, "It takes ten years to make a comedian." In the full French sense

of Comedy, it does take ten years, no doubt: ten years and a temperament. But then the Comedy of France involves acquaintance with the world: intimate knowledge of the best social bearing: no small acquaintance, by observation or experience, with the ins and outs of a light love affair, and with a woman's moods in all sorts of conjunctures: waywardness, and indulged tenderness: unreasoned preference, fascinating irresponsibility. Galatea's comedy was not of that order, or that range. It was simplicity, *naïveté*, the sudden joy of living.

More difficult than that—to healthy youth, like Mrs. Kendal's—was it to express with at all equal force the depths of human affection. Certainly, from the first there had been moments when the opulence of her own nature —its warmth, dare I say? and its intensity —had been more or less revealed. But they were "moments." They were almost accidents. And the step was a long one from that stage to the stage in which the artist, observant and reflective, and sensitive besides, could weave into her acting something of her Past, or of the Past of her fellows, and enhance with high imagination the thing remarked or remembered. At the St. James's, in association with her husband and John

Hare, many were the legitimate successes of the leading heroine of domestic drama. There was *The Squire*—Pinero's early serious piece, with its strange resemblance to *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Amazing was Mrs. Kendal in the part that recalls Bathsheba Everdene; at every instant there was interest, truth, vitality. Yet, as an expression of emotion, twice I think within my recollection has that performance been surpassed. Once was in the intense pathos of the performance of Mrs. Clifford's *The Likeness of the Night*. And that achievement was in years quite recent. I saw the piece, myself, by going over into Kennington—to the prettiest, I doubt not, of really suburban theatres—where, on a certain night, Mrs. Kendal—on the eve of an attack of Influenza, as it presently appeared—had to make superhuman efforts to do the thing at all, as I heard from Mrs. Hodgson Burnett and the Miss Hepworth-Dixons, whom I saw in their box. She did it with what I am inclined to call superhuman power. She was as one "possessed." And the other occasion —a few years earlier than the time of *The Likeness of the Night*—was at the St. James's, in I think the later days of Mrs. Kendal's association with that playhouse. The play was an adaptation, by Mr. Clement Scott, of Madame

Emile de Girardin's one-act piece, *La Joie fait Peur*. The butler in *La Joie fait Peur*—the butler as he was played by Got, at the Français—is the creation that dominates. In the Clement Scott adaptation, with Mrs. Kendal in it, it was Mrs. Kendal who dominated—and that was in the nature of things. The wife—Mrs. Kendal—is in London: the husband is in India: and there is no news from him whatever: there is grave reason to fear that he is dead: the wife does fear it—dreads it—but her dread must be concealed; and to her husband's mother—who is a blind woman—a letter—all imaginary—has to be read. And you see Mrs. Kendal with forced brightness, and then with many tears, inventing the letter—and that is the most pathetic scene I ever saw in my life—or, if it is surpassed, it is surpassed only by the moment of rapture at the husband's return.

Unlike the leading actresses of the Français—the Madeleine Brohan of my boyhood, who was then already mature: the Madame Favart who was pre-eminently the Muse, sombre and consolatory, of the *Nuit d'Octobre:* the Madame Arnould Plessy of my earlier manhood, already then the greatest of *grandes dames*, and an Elvire, in *Tartuffe*, a little too antiquated—Mrs. Kendal was not, as a rule, at

her finest in literary drama: she was not at her finest in classic parts: not even in classical comedy: she was not at her finest in Shakespeare. But it may be that I have shown to such younger readers as exist under the disadvantage of having no experience of her art, that Mrs. Kendal, on lines quite of her own—as the naive girl and the devoted woman: the normal woman in good and evil fortune: in radiant happiness and bitter misery—did traverse the keyboard of emotion: striking with firm fingers the ringing treble and the disconsolate bass. Since I have seen her splendid counterfeit of Life, I have understood Life less imperfectly.

XXII

GREAT PREACHERS

"THERE is only one great preacher left to us in the Church," said Mr. Brown Borthwick, to me once, at Scarborough. He was a thoughtful preacher himself—had brought to great usefulness his church of All Saints; was an authority on music, and a man of the world. "And that is the Bishop of Ripon," Brown Borthwick added. It was after Liddon's death.

I had not heard the Bishop then—though of course I knew his reputation. Very soon, I made a point of hearing him. Early one Sunday evening—tired already by the agreeable exercise of one of H. D. Traill's lunches, where there were always half a dozen people you were delighted to talk to (I mention it to show that my own mood at church may not have been the most receptive), I heard the Bishop in his brother's pulpit in Bloomsbury—in Mr. Boyd Carpenter's church of St. George's, near Mudie's Library. Later—not more than a year afterwards—I heard

him at St. Peter's, Eaton Square. The first impression to put down is that of his extreme inequality. At St. George's, Bloomsbury, I heard—I seemed to be hearing—one who was scarcely less than a man of genius. At St. Peter's, Eaton Square, it was a man of talent, who was creditably fulfilling his task.

The sermon at St. Peter's—my second opportunity—I have implied it already—was serious and solid: it was capable and à propos; and it was delivered well, but in no sense wonderfully. In the sermon at St. George's, the Bishop had seemed at no moment to be drawing from the convictions of his Past—convictions no doubt always existing, sometimes latent—to impart to him the fire for To-day. He spoke rather, and from first to last, from the convictions of that hour, burningly within him; and that he might express them adequately—do justice to his theme—he employed lavishly the resources of thinker, writer, orator. He was logical; he was cogent; he was penetrating; he was satirical and touching. He was vigour and earnestness from end to end. There was no resisting such an appeal. It was the appeal of a prophet, endowed with sagacity as well as vision.

I have no desire to echo Brown Borthwick's

opinion—if it was true when he uttered it, it may not be true to-day. "The only great preacher left to us in the Church" I will not call—I should hesitate to call—Boyd Carpenter. But the greatest to whom I have been privileged to listen, I may, in words of soberness and moderation, call him.

Once I saw our new Canon of Westminster conduct the business of a Committee. I was the witness of his exactness and rapidity, and of his grasp of the essential point. Once, at a great Meeting at the large Queen's Hall —Lord Rothschild in the chair—it was a meeting to protest against the persecution of the Jews in Eastern Europe—I heard him as a platform speaker. The spare little man stood up with alacrity, as soon as he was called upon; lightly clasped his small, nervous hands behind him, and faced the great audience without a note. He began slowly and in a tone entirely conversational. He put the facts before men with faultless lucidity. Then, in a voice waxing more and more earnest and resonant, he appealed to great principles, and, leading us gradually upwards, reached, before he had done, to heights of fine simplicity and noble vision, such as were scaled, in the greatest

of his speeches, by John Bright, fifty years ago, and by no one else that I have known in my time, in English political or religious utterance.

When Brown Borthwick pronounced his *dictum*, that the only great preacher was the Bishop of Ripon, Stopford Brooke had already left the Church of England, and so he could not be in the reckoning. I had reminded my friend at Scarborough of that fact. But when I think of Stopford Brooke, not necessarily at Bedford Chapel at all, but in times yet more remote, when he was at the now destroyed proprietary chapel in York Street, St. James's Square, I am convinced I have in my mind a preacher who, to Boyd Carpenter, was, at the least, a very good second. It is true he was to some extent for another public; but that is not important—there would certainly have been an overlapping on the public's part. Half of the people who would have been fitted to appreciate the great Bishop of Ripon, would have been also the best fitted to appreciate the young man, eloquent and brilliant, who in the 'Seventies of the last Century had come lately from the chapel of the Embassy, Berlin.

Stopford Brooke was more ornate than the preachers I have already discussed. His

temperament—his Irish temperament—caused his work to be bedecked with flowers of Fancy. To say that he was more emotional than the English dignitary is not to say at all that he was not intellectual. To say that would be ridiculous. Thought and meditation, and meditation in high mental latitudes, in regions peopled by the great constructive poets—Wordsworth and Coleridge perhaps the chief of them—were the very basis of the fabric he raised. He had the courage to face modern problems, and he could preach a sermon that was a criticism excellent and final of the "Melancholia" of Dürer. This variety, this range, of mood and mental action, accounted for the range and variety of the audiences that crowded the little chapel in York Street. Opposite me in the gallery, I used to see Mr. Justice Mellish—one of the subtlest lawyers of his time—Mr. Justice Mellish sitting with open mind, and a countenance trained to express nothing. After the sermon, I have seen Matthew Arnold walking thoughtfully down the staircase, detached and analytical. Neurotic women of Fashion and great place have I beheld, enraptured and enthusiastic, in the front seats. The young man about Town was present occasionally, and you would hear him, after the *sortie* — as he

stood on the street pavement, waiting for the Fair—wondering whether Stopford Brooke was "a humbug," and deciding that he was not. But so much emotion seemed unnatural to the young man—his own heart scarcely aroused—and he remembered, besides, that, like Charles Honeyman's, this was a proprietary chapel, and that, as at Charles Honeyman's, there were wine vaults underneath it. Still, the verdict was favourable. Then there were active members of Parliament, busy professional men, and quiet men of Letters, pretty ladies, and here and there the anxious young man, still troubled, because of his youth, to solve, or not to solve, the riddle of the world. Moreau's "Sortie de l'Opéra" might have found its counterpart, or its pendant, had some observer of Life—a Frith with greater power to "spot" the characteristics of the refined world—or a Jean Béraud who could grasp the English type—recorded the *exeunt* from York Street Chapel, in the 'Seventies. On the pavement, there was the clash of secular tongues: but in the pulpit all had been earnestness, reflectiveness, eloquence, reverence.

What a contrast it was — how different everything except the congregation—when, one Sunday morning, unexpectedly, instead

of Stopford Brooke, with his atmosphere of poetry and feeling, we had, as sole ministrant, an elderly, bald-headed little gentleman, dapper and prim, who read to us a sermon of the very neatest, a benevolent essay of the most precise, which nevertheless here and there wandered for a moment into regions of well-bred satire, so that we were able to recognize, not the face only and the piping treble voice, but the hand also, the individual mind, of the Master of Balliol—Jowett.

As a boy, I heard the famous preaching Bishop of Oxford — Samuel Wilberforce. That was in Bristol Cathedral. The occasion was interesting. I cannot say it was borne in upon me that Wilberforce was actually great. There too, at Bristol, first of all, and afterwards at Leeds—and the Vicarage of Leeds is the sure gate to Bishoprics—I heard Dr. Woodford, whose manner was based to some extent, I have been told, upon that of the subtle Bishop of Oxford. Indeed, I recognized some similarity myself —but the similarity never suggested imitation. In eloquence, but thoughtful eloquence, Woodford abounded—he owed a debt to the great Bossuet—and he possessed what is a rare thing now, but very soothing, the "Port wine voice"—the enriched tones of one who,

whatever he may be, is certain not to be revolutionary—one rests with him contentedly in the accepted order of things.

Stanley I heard once—soon after I had read the sympathetic and appreciative sermon he preached when England was lamenting Dickens. An interesting and careful, and, for the times, even a bold preacher; but I have never understood that he was accounted a great one. It was much, however, that there should be, at the Westminster Deanery—as the centre of social life in the Westminster of his day—such a tolerant, comprehensive, liberal spirit, to whom the quality of natural sweetness could scarcely, I suppose, be denied.

When in New York, in 1885, I made a point of walking across the bridge to Brooklyn, in order to hear Ward Beecher; and all the more, because at Boston I had missed Phillips Brooks. Of course, in Ward Beecher's church, as in the churches of his community generally (it was exactly the same at Dr. Parker's), the preacher is everything, and all the rest nothing. It was the first Sunday after Beecher had come back from a long and recuperative holiday, and he was, seemingly, in the best possible condition. His pulpit, or his platform—which was the particular institution at Brooklyn I at this distance of

time forget—was made gay and festive by flower and shrub, brought in from his place out in the country—Pough Keepsie, was it? —I know it sounded at once American and rural. The great congregation lacked no element of good behaviour, and the impression made upon me by Ward Beecher was, not of "cheapness," not of theatricality, but of good solid thought, of utterance effective and plucky.

From Ward Beecher one passes naturally to Dr. Parker. Dr. Parker's manner—though I have not the very faintest reason to doubt his full sincerity—was infinitely more theatrical than was Ward Beecher's: indeed there were tones and mannerisms that suggested to me either a close study of Henry Irving, or, failing that, the magical effect of, it may be, one single experience of him, acting on an organization sympathetic, responsive and prepared. Parker, like Boyd Carpenter—like all men, more or less—was unequal; but his level, in my small experience of perhaps three sermons, seemed always high. At his best—and his best for me was when he appeared ("appeared" must be forgiven) at a Wesleyan Chapel at Hampstead: not in a place of his own sect's—at his best, he approached greatness: I should even say, reached it.

At the Church of St. Peter's, Vere Street —associated with F. D. Maurice in an earlier generation—there preached habitually, during a score of years or more—and it is comparatively lately that those years were over—that most distinguished, in recent times, of the Canons of Canterbury, Page Roberts. There was a moment—after the death of Bradley —at which it seemed to some that it would have been altogether fitting that Page Roberts should have had the Deanery of Westminster. It was offered to, and accepted by, another; and then, after a little lapse of time, a Deanery fell vacant within the confines of Thomas Hardy's Wessex, and Page Roberts withdrew himself to the grey peace of Salisbury. Salisbury of course gained what Westminster had lost. There was some satisfaction in the move. But it was to Westminster, I cannot help believing, that was best adapted this piquant, luminous exponent of a thought that is reverent and free. Intellectual London—which inspired him, and which he influenced—was Page Roberts's world.

Strictly speaking, the phrase "a *great* preacher," is not the best one to apply to the long-time incumbent of St. Peter's, Vere Street; but Page Roberts was—and I hope, as

Dean of Salisbury, is still to-day—a preacher curiously interesting, reasonable, full of the best modern spirit: and a man of the world, whose conception of Life, and Life's duties, had dignity and wisdom. In taste, and habit of thought, sagaciously poetic—"sagaciously" because it is to the real poets that the secrets of Life are entrusted—he lived with great Literature, and expressed himself in its terms. A reasoner equipped and cogent upon the themes he was disposed to handle, his was the gift of polite sarcasm, the saving grace of humour.

To the interest of the sermon in Vere Street, was added the interest of hearing Page Roberts read the lessons, and something besides. His performance of that task must have satisfied, I should surmise, Sir Squire Bancroft, whom I was wont to espy, well placed in the middle of the church, carefully listening. To me, of the narrative unfolded in the Lesson, the reading made a living thing. While perfectly unconventional, the delivery never sought to be extremely dramatic; and, I confess, my own views upon what is appropriate in public reading are pretty decided: I avow myself an opponent of everything that makes reading approximate to Acting—the Reader's art is his own. Even the reading of Drama and of such Fiction as is mainly, or

largely, dialogue, should very rarely, I think, adopt all the means which, on the Stage, are legitimate and efficacious. Regard must be had to the perspective and the *décor*. Generally, in reading, I should object to the employment of the full gamut. A perfect reader is one who comprehends and practises delicately the art of the *nuance*.

How deeply does the personality affect every performance, and the result that it produces! That pretty obvious truth was never realized more fully by me than when I saw and heard for the first time—at the Parish Church of Buxton—the first Bishop of Southwell, Dr. Ridding, who, in his earlier function of great schoolmaster, had re-made Winchester. The man said nothing, in Buxton Church that day, which was strikingly fresh—which you wanted to note down and remember. It was all that was said between the lines—it was all that he did not actually say—it was all that he avoided saying—it was what he looked and was—that made up the sum of his effect. It was distinction and magnetism.

Several times after that impressive introduction to him, I heard the Bishop of Southwell, in Derbyshire and London. Sometimes he chose his words not very skilfully—I have

known his sentences a jumble. Even on those occasions he was a great preacher—because he was a great man. At the Church for the Deaf and Dumb, in Oxford Street, I heard him preach, with perfect apprehension of the need for that particular occasion—when somebody, as the Bishop spoke, translated into the language of the fingers the uttered word. At the Church of St. Ann's at Buxton—the mother church of the place, a church perched up, ancient and small, upon the Derbyshire hill-side—he was among the evidences of an extremely High Church ceremonial and method, known very well not to be to his individual taste. In bearing and in word Ridding accepted with a finished tact the possibility—probability even—of a utility to others, of ways not serviceable to himself. He was delivered of a sermon, brief, exquisite, complete.

Volumes of Sermons are little noticed in the public Press; and not much attention was given, outside ecclesiastical journals, I suppose, to the collection of preachments issued either not very long before or very soon after Ridding's lamented death. I will venture to say of it that it is a mine of liberal thought; and I think that it includes one sermon, at least, which should make it especially sympathetic to

the artist—the artist in Literature or Painting—since it puts into nothing less than its proper place the refining, sometimes the redeeming influence of all Art, upon those to whom it is a pursuit, a duty, and a passion.

I doubt if such a view of Art, pictorial or literary—of its almost moral functions, of its immense sustenance for those prepared by Nature and Thought to receive it and practise it—could ever have occurred to the great Liddon, whom twice, on Sunday afternoons, in his later day, have I listened to, under the dome of St. Paul's. Liddon had humour; but, so far as I know, you did not suspect it in his sermons. A master of a style lucid, explanatory, he was not without literary interest. But he was theologian, above everything. To the inheritance of what was called "the Oxford Movement"—the work of Pusey, Keble, and of the English days of the most rightly fascinating Newman—Liddon was the direct successor. When he preached, it was a substantial, a large meal for mind and spirit that was eaten at the table he spread. Nearly an hour it took him to preach in St. Paul's—where delivery is necessarily slow—one of his St. Paul's sermons. That, I believe, is equal to about three-quarters of an hour elsewhere—at least in most places—and

in his closely fitted writing there were no *longueurs*. Being myself, for the most part, perhaps curiously unconcerned with Theology, I should have felt, I expect, the strain of Liddon's closely knit discourse on themes to which I scarcely had entrance, bu for the emanations of his personality, the sense of goodness, the charm of comeliness, the voice, bell-like in quality, and whose light tones were used with skill. The congregation itself was impressive: people of all kinds, but of the graver sort mostly, gathered from all parts of London, with a contingent of visitors from the country, from Scotland, from America—and these, in unusual proportion, were of the Cloth: worshippers who no doubt had come to worship, but, above all, students, as it were, who had come to study a master.

From that experience of, as nearly as may be, twenty years ago, I go back—to end with —to an earlier time, and to two preachers who had impressed my youth, in my own countryside; and there was a sense, certainly, in which both of them were great.

The life—practically—of David Wright (a volume of whose sermons was published after his death, with an Introduction, sympathetic enough, but yet not very personal, not very descriptive, not hitting the nail precisely on the

head, by the late Canon Alfred Ainger) was passed as Incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop. Early in that modest and shy career, David Wright, really shrinking from publicity, yet conscious of his gift, and, as it were, living for his sermons, won the regard, not only of sober-minded folk in his particular parish (where was my father's place), but of all that was intellectual in the town, or Bristolian suburb, of Clifton, separated from the nearer portions of Stoke Bishop by only a mile of down-land. To the end he kept that regard, and the regard became respect, and the respect reverence.

Though he was heard, I believe, at St. Peter's, Vere Street, in the latest days of Maurice; though one year he was Chaplain preaching at the Mayor's Chapel, Bristol; and though he preached in Westminster Abbey, what is called preferment—a definite lift—never came to him. Canon of Bristol is the very least that it was felt he should have been. David Wright was one of the people it is impossible to describe. The personality was elusive and retiring. It was essential he should be seen and listened to in church. What one remembers is a grave presence; a head unusually noble; lines, on the face, of thought, and controlled sadness; a voice deep without

heaviness—a voice cheerful in private company, but fitted well to give expression in the pulpit to his unsurpassed sense of the accepted pathos of our human fortunes.

In that profound and reverent gravity—and in much besides—David Wright was at one, absolutely, with an occasional, a frequent preacher, whom I think he did not know: an elderly Friend, Robert Charlton, whom I—I am glad to say—had great chances of hearing when I accompanied my Father, driving into Bristol, to the Friends' Meeting House, in Rosemary Street, on Sunday mornings, before 1870, and, sometimes, after it.

The reader knows (I hope) that amongst the people called Quakers, no one is formally consecrated to—his life set aside for—"the Ministry." In theory—and in fact, unless his utterances prove inappropriate and unwelcome—any one so minded, or so "moved" —any one with a "concern," in the phraseology of the Friends—can hold forth for the general edification, and for the relief of his spirit, at the meetings for worship. If, after a time, their spoken contributions of thought and feeling are held to have value —to be entitled to encouragement, for the common good—these speakers are recognized as "Ministers"—of course wholly un-

paid—and this recognition is not intended to arrest or narrowly limit their interest in, and pursuit of, their profession or trade. I forget what Robert Charlton was, exactly—I think a manufacturer or merchant, on a scale not large. I am certain that in his secular work Robert Charlton added to the unblemished honour that is exacted of Friends—generally — that which is also of course encouraged, but cannot in the nature of things be exacted, a treatment rather specially kind and generous, of every servant or subordinate with whom he had to do. Between Robert Charlton's daily life in business and his life of the spirit, there was, I am sure, no discord; so that, without difficulty—but fortified, no doubt, by thought and reading, and the practice of a charity which began, it may be, but never ended with alms-giving—he came from the affairs of the week into the atmosphere of a Sunday which, with Friends, has at no time been puritanical, into the silence of the Meeting: a silence which is not the barren silence of the superficial, but a silence that Maeterlinck has fathomed, and set forth the fruitful depths of, in the first essay in *Le Trésor des Humbles.* Many there are, as Maeterlinck remarks, "*qui n'ont pas le Silence.*"

For a while one would see Robert Charlton —in the Ministers' slightly raised gallery— sitting in reverent quietude. Deeply, more deeply, was he immersed in thought. That was revealed to one, as time passed on, in the workings of his face. His soul was in travail. What was to be the upshot? It might be, he said nothing. Much likelier, however, after some further wrestling, he would remove his hat suddenly; then rise; grasp the firm gallery balustrade, in front of him; and, with a countenance altogether inspired, with a voice extraordinarily melodious, pour out the burden of his meditations —of his solicitude, of his encouragement—in a spirit that was pure poetry and in a form that was the very best of English prose.

In a sketch of some of the great English-speaking preachers I have had the privilege to listen to, it would have been a folly indeed, much more—it would have seemed to me not loyal—to have left out the name of Robert Charlton.

THE END

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